

# Apart From Jesus We Can Do Nothing

by David Valderrama

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*The sermon emphasizes the necessity of the presence of Jesus for true transformation and empowerment in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 1:08:18

**Scripture:** Psalm 16:11, Psalm 17:15, Matthew 18:20, James 4:5, 2 Peter 3:9

**Topics:** "Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of accepting and believing the teachings of the Apostle John in 1 John. They caution against twisting or explaining away the message, urging listeners to accept it with childlike faith. The speaker also highlights the need for repentance and conversion, quoting Peter's words in Acts 3:19. They emphasize the significance of the presence of Jesus in our lives and how it is essential for transformation and victory over sin. The sermon concludes with a call to depend on and cling to Jesus in all aspects of life.

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## Transcript

I have a bunch of scriptures to read here. Psalm 16, verse 11, says you will show me the path of life. In your presence is fullness of joy.

At your right hand there are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 17, verse 15 says, as for me, I will behold your face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake in your likeness.

The way that we can be transformed into the very likeness and image of God, it is not through an intense study of the scriptures. It is not through attending weekly meetings. It is not because we have it all explained to us what God is like.

And therefore, having it explained to us, we understand and we know intellectually what meekness is, gentleness, love, faithfulness, and so forth. These things are not enough to transform us into the likeness of Jesus. The reason why people are not walking in victory over their flesh, they are not walking in victory as far as being faithful to the teachings of Jesus.

The reason why people have unforgiveness in their heart, the reason why they are bitter about their circumstances, or bitter about some offense that has taken root in their heart. The reason why people are unhappy, the reason why people have no peace, the reason why people are still cowards, lacking

boldness to share Jesus with their unsaved relatives and neighbors. The one thing that all these situations lack, that all these people lack, is the presence of Jesus.

It is the presence of Jesus that transforms us. Without His presence, we are absolutely powerless. We are powerless to cast out devils.

We are powerless to heal the sick. We are powerless to walk in victory over sin. We are powerless to faithfully, consistently, live out the teachings of Jesus and deny ourselves and bear our crosses every day.

Jesus said that apart from Me, you can do nothing. Apart from Me. He didn't say apart from My words.

He didn't say apart from My doctrine. He didn't say apart from My example. He didn't say apart from the Scriptures.

He said apart from Me, the living Christ, you can do nothing. How desperately do we need the presence of Jesus in our life? How desperately do we need to understand all these Scriptures I'm about to get into? I hope that upon reading these Scriptures, may the Lord guide my tongue and add His anointing to the words that are His. And that an utter helplessness apart from His presence take deep root in our hearts and cause us to totally depend on Him and cleave to Him and cling to Him because He is our life.

He is our hope. He is our everything. Whatever we're doing, if we're mowing the lawn, if we're cleaning the house, if we're working on some computer project, if we're reading the Bible, if we're spending time with children, if we're sitting on our bed, if we're building a home, whatever we are doing, let's not do it without the presence of Jesus.

We desperately need Him. We desperately need Him. We can memorize every word that He said and still do nothing the way that He would do it if we don't have His presence.

Psalms chapter 31 verse 20 says, You shall hide them in the secret of Your presence from the pride of man. You shall keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues. In the presence of Jesus, when we are experiencing the presence of Jesus through childlike faith, with simplicity of heart, just believing that He's near to us, that He is with us, that He loves us and we experience His comfort, this inward consolation of His abiding presence through the Spirit within us, we shall be kept from the pride of man and the strife of tongues.

If we are experiencing the presence of Jesus, we will not be sucked in, striving over words unto no profit, no profit, from being drawn in to worthless contentions, contentions filled with pride. The proverb says that contention does not come except by pride. If we are experiencing the presence of Jesus, we will be satisfied, we will be comforted, we will be at rest.

We won't feel the need to prove ourselves, defend ourselves, explain ourselves, to speak into the ears of a fool that's trying to provoke us with his conduct or unreasonable questions. In the presence of Jesus, there is rest for our souls. In the presence of Jesus, we're not lusting after something, we're not angry about something, we're not offended about anything, because there is something about being in the presence of Jesus that is transformative and empowering.

But King David says over and over and over and over again in the Psalms, he mentions the word presence. And when he's referring to presence, he's referring to the presence of the Lord. In Hebrew, the name for Lord is Yahweh.

It means the eternal, self-existent one, the I Am. I Am. The I Am.

The unexplainable, paradoxical reality of the Lord's presence of an eternal power and mind and wisdom and life that existed independently of all things and from whom are all things. This mystery called God is the reason for our existence and it is in His presence that our souls find rest, that we are at ease, that we have peace, that we have joy, unspeakable and full of glory. Psalm 139, King David lived in a constant awareness of the nearness of God.

This is what made him the mighty king that he was, the mighty man of valor that he was. This is what inspired the faith that he needed to slay the giant, to slay the lion and the bear. This is what made him the kind of man so that when he returned home to Ziklag and he didn't find his wife and his fellow soldiers, didn't find their wives and their families and their possessions.

The Philistines, I believe it was, or some band of men came by there, plundered their goods, took off with their women and their children. And he encouraged himself in the Lord. He drew near to the presence of God.

He didn't sit and just, what am I going to do? Oh man, I'm going to be killed. All my men are going to stone me. Oh, it's impossible to know where they're at.

We'll never find them. My wife's gone. My children are gone.

All of the families of my soldiers are gone. Life is over. It's never going to be the same.

He didn't murmur and complain. And he drew near to the presence of God. And in the presence of God, he found what he needed to go after his wives and children and the wives and children of his soldiers.

And he recovered all, the Bible says. He recovered all. Not one thing was lost.

It was the presence of God that empowered him and that accomplished that through him. David was not alone in that conflict. He was not alone in that battle.

And he may have felt like that initially when he returned to Ziklag, but he knew who was with him. He knew that God didn't forsake him. He knew that God didn't raise him up to be a king only to lead him this far to be stoned by his men.

When they returned, having no possessions and no families left, he encouraged himself in the Lord. He drew near to the presence of God. And in the presence of the Lord, he found what he needed.

And he recovered all. King David lived in a constant awareness of the presence of God. Whenever he couldn't perceive the nearness of God, he was troubled.

He said, you hid your face and I was troubled. You hid your face and I was troubled. I cannot perceive your nearness, Lord.

I don't know if you're for me or against me. Did I do something wrong? I've analyzed myself. I've searched my heart.

I can't find anything, Lord. Please don't leave me. Don't leave me in this helpless state.

You are my everything. I need you. It says in Psalm 30 that by your favor, by your presence, you have made my mountain to stand strong.

You've made me what I am, a man after your own heart, a lover of God and hater of sin. But in Psalm 139, verse 7, King David says, where shall I go from your spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend up into heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, you are there.

If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall your hand lead me and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness does not hide from you, but the night shines as the day.

The darkness and the light are both alike to you. Wouldn't that be wonderful to be able to say that from real experience? Let's start saying it. It's true.

Believe it. If King David could experience this under the Old Covenant, he didn't know even the fullness of what we know probably. He prophesied of Christ.

He knew that God was going to redeem man. He didn't, I don't think he knew everything that we know. But he was a dear friend of God and the Lord shared this secret with him.

But we have a new covenant. We have a new covenant that is built on better promises. It says in Hebrews, we can enter into the holiest place into the presence of God himself by a new and living way consecrated by the blood of Jesus.

Through faith in what Jesus Christ has accomplished through his life and through his death, we can enter into the very presence of God with absolutely no sacrifice other than a broken and contrite heart, a heart of faith, a heart of adoration for the one that made it possible for us to experience him in his fullness. This right here is the testimony that I want to live the rest of my life in. I don't want to live the rest of my life.

One week, God is with me. He's for me. Next week, I don't know what he's going to do to me.

I don't know. Where did he go? Did he leave me? That's not the way to live your life. If you are surrendered to Jesus Christ, if you are yielded to him, you're not resisting his will, you're not rebelling against him, you're not presuming upon his kindness, you have every reason to experience his presence.

If you failed, you're washed through the blood. Your sin has been dealt with. Our failure has been dealt with by Jesus the great physician who took away our sins.

What we need is the presence of Jesus. What we need is to be transformed into his likeness. As the psalmist said, I shall be satisfied when I awake in your likeness.

And he knew that it took the presence of Jesus. He knew that he needed the presence of the Lord to be transformed into his likeness. And we still need the presence of the Lord.

Acts chapter 3, like New Testament Christians, you know there's only one kind of Christian, right? But a lot of people that just focus on the New Testament, they leave out certain things like the presence of God. They don't emphasize the presence of God, they don't talk about the presence of God, they don't teach on the presence of God, they don't explain it. They think it's spooky, they think it's strange.

Some even go as far as thinking that it's a stumbling block, especially to new believers, to talk about the presence of God. What do you mean the presence of God? This just makes things way too complicated. How do we know if it's the presence of God? How do we know that what we think we're perceiving really is the presence of God? It just opens up a whole Pandora's box full of doubts and confusion.

And so they just totally write it off and forsake it and counsel to teach against it. I've experienced that. But look at how much King David's life depended upon it.

Even Jesus said, apart from me you can do nothing. He didn't just say that to those there with him at that moment 2,000 years ago. John wrote that after Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried and raised from the dead.

John wrote that for believers that weren't standing there to hear those words. Was it just so we can have a count of words that absolutely mean nothing to us and have no impact on our lives? No. Jesus was literally saying that apart from me you can do nothing.

Our very lives, our character, our evangelism, our relationships, all that we are and all that we could ever do is totally dependent upon the presence of Jesus to produce the fruit that He's worthy of and He desires. It says in Acts 3, verse 19, Peter says, he's been preaching, he says, repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from what? From the presence of the Lord. When we surrender our very lives to give the Lord full control and we admit our faults, we admit God have mercy on me a sinner.

I've done wrong. I've transgressed. I've despised your ways.

Lord, forgive me. Wash me. When we turn to Jesus Christ and put our faith in Him, we know that our sins are washed away.

That our sins have been blotted out because there's the presence of Jesus that we experience. And our souls are refreshed by His presence. There's a comfort that we experience.

There's a peace that we experience. My sins are gone. Now, some people may not have experienced that depending on how they started.

If you listen to a bunch of people that preach a bunch of law, a bunch of commandments, a bunch of judgments and a bunch of warning, yeah, we need all that. But if your conversion was just that and they just stop there, they leave you high and dry. Maybe not every time, but a lot of people are left in a state of confusion, not really knowing if their sins are washed away.

And every person that turns to Jesus Christ and surrenders their life doesn't mean they'll never make a mistake. In 1 John 2, the apostle John says, I have written to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His namesake. When he wrote that, did he make an investigation upon every person that would hear those words read, is there sin in your life right now? Because I can't write this, I can't say this about you if there's still sins in your life that you haven't yet confessed or turned from.

Did he send a letter to the church there saying I need a list of everyone in your church that's still sinning, so that way when I write, I have written to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His namesake. Did he need to receive a letter from them about who's still sinning in the church, so that way he could write it differently? He could have said, I have written to you, little children, because you stopped

sinning and you never sinned again and you never made a mistake and you never failed again, therefore your sins are forgiven you for His namesake. How could he say that unless there was something that he knew? How could he know that their sins were forgiven for His namesake? How could he say that? Because some people think that if you make a mistake, if you stumble, if you sin, if you fail in some way since your conversion, your sin's not forgiven.

But it seems like in the mind of the Apostle John was that if you're truly born of God, you will not remain in sin. You will not live a life of sin. It says whoever is born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God.

God has put His very life within man. It's an incorruptible seed. It's a power of God.

It's the wisdom of God. It's Jesus Himself on the inside of us. According to the Apostle John, there's something so powerful that happens if you try returning back to your vomit, you're not going to stay in it very long.

You're going to know exactly what you're doing, why you're doing it, this is wrong. You won't be able to stay there. You just can't live that way anymore.

That is what the Apostle John taught in 1 John. Many people try to twist it or explain it away or say, well that's not sound doctrine. And they got all these other scriptures over here to say it.

Well I just accept what it says by childlike faith. And I accept the other warnings that seem to indicate I can fall away. I accept it all.

Just accept it all. Don't try to understand it, just believe it all. Either way we need to make our calling and our election sure.

But Peter said, repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. James 4, verse 5. Do you think that the scripture says in vain, the spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy? Now he's saying this because these believers were befriending the world.

They were behaving like the world. They were caught up in wars and strife and selfishness as believers sometimes experience and go through. If you read the churches in the New Testament, you read about believers, people that were filled with the Spirit of God, born again, God's children, heirs of the Kingdom of God.

When you read about the churches, you often see that some people were caught up in strife. Even Barnabas and Paul were caught up in a strife. There's conflict, there's strife, people stumble into pride, competition, there's all kinds of things that we stumble into.

It doesn't mean we're not called to God, we're not filled by God, that God doesn't live in us. He just vacates at His first defense. That's not what He does.

When He comes to live on the inside of us, He comes to stay. That is His full intention, His full purpose, His full plan, is to wash our sins away and make our bodies His temple, a dwelling place where He can rest and empower us and live His life through us. When He comes to us, He comes to stay.

That is His full intention. I understand there are some scriptures like Revelation 3, Jesus is outside the church knocking on the door saying, hey, I'm outside, wake up. If any man opens this door, I will come into him and will suck with him.

We will fellowship. And I would say it takes a lot for Jesus to get to that place. It's possible, obviously it's possible, it's in the scriptures.

But let's realize that Jesus is long-suffering, He's patient, and He has faith in us. He believes in us because He knows what He is able to produce on the inside. It says, Peter went as far as to say that He's given us all the divine power we need.

He's given us all that we need that pertains to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him that called us to glory and virtue. But it's the presence of Jesus that we need. And so He says, do you think that the scripture says in vain, the spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy? Like the spirit of God has to compete for our affection, our attention, our desires, our thoughts, our feelings, our whatever it is, our life, the choices we're making.

The spirit of God within us will lust to envy. Literally Jesus will start fighting against us. Jesus will cause us to be restless in sin, in selfishness, in pride.

When our hearts go astray, if we are going away from the Lord, the spirit within us lusts to envy. There's something that the spirit of God will do within us to bring us back to where we're supposed to be. And it says, but He gives more grace.

Wherefore He says, God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. How many of us need grace in here? I need a lot of grace in my life. I do.

Therefore, let's be quick to humble ourselves. Let's be quick to make ourselves of no reputation. Let's be quick to die to the opinions of everybody around us.

If their opinion doesn't matter in the sight of God. Let's be quick to lose our lives because we need grace. Right? He says, God resists the proud, but He gives grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves, therefore, to God, resist the devil and he will, everybody say he will flee from you. So make yourselves to God, resist the devil and the devil will flee. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you.

How do we draw near to someone that lives on the inside of us? That is so close at his very presence through his spirit is within us. How do we draw near to him? What does that mean that he will draw near to us? Acknowledge him in all our ways. Good point.

Draw near to me and I will draw near unto you. What does he mean? This is important for us because how many of us in here need him to be near? I do. I need him to be really close to me and I'm not ashamed of it.

I don't believe he just wants me to stand on my own two feet all by myself. That's what the world says. He wants me to stand on him, to lean upon him entirely like a little child.

There's a lot of worldly wisdom in church today. Oh, you'll just grow out of it, David. Oh, you'll grow out of it, Brandon.

Oh, you'll lose that fire, Ryan, or whatever. You know, things will never be the same, Tasha's and poor Moomer's. That's a lie from the pit of hell.

That's the mouth of the devil speaking to us. We can live each day in the presence of God and be transformed into his very likeness so that he will literally be living through us as if he was here on earth. All things are possible with God.

We hear things like that. You mean he can live his life here on earth as though he was here in the flesh? Yes, through his spirit abiding in us. People hear that and they're like, well, I don't know about that.

Well, yeah, it's impossible by ourselves. We can't do it on our own. But with him, we can.

And that's what he wants more than anything. And that's what we ought to want more than anything. That's what the world needs more than anything.

It's what our family needs more than anything. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Sapphira said it means to acknowledge him in all our ways.

It is. But as we set our affection upon him, as we acknowledge him, as we in utter dependency upon him because we understand what we were before him and what we've been throughout our pilgrimage without him, different moments where we just walked in the flesh or went out on our own authority or trusted in ourselves to do something, we know what we are without him. But it's whenever he draws near to us, he reveals himself.

He makes himself known to us. He opens our understanding to the scriptures, to his character, to the nearness of his presence or whatever it is. There's something that he gives to us, that he reveals to us, that he shows us.

That's what it means that he draws near to us. Exodus chapter 33. Exodus chapter 33 verse 15.

This is what Moses says. And Moses said unto him, that is the Lord, if your presence does not go with me, carry us not up hence. Don't bring us into the promised land if your presence does not go with us.

That land that flows with milk and honey will be worse than this waste howling wilderness without your presence. Here my body is thirsty, but there my soul will be thirsty. King Davis says, my heart pants after the Lord, that my soul thirsts after the Lord.

Moses was thirsty for the Lord. He was thirsty for the presence of the Lord. He said, I don't want to go anywhere without you.

I don't want to do anything without you. Many people will be satisfied with the work that God has called them to do. They will be satisfied.

Okay, he wants me to go do this. Okay, I'm just going to go do it with all my might. Moses could have done that.

God called him to bring this people into the promised land. He could have been satisfied. I'm just going to go work as hard as I can.

I'm going to try to motivate these people and inspire faith within them and just bring them into the promised land. Many people are like that today. They just want to keep it simple.

They don't want to complicate the Christian life. But this is absolutely necessary. Moses said, if you don't go with me, I don't want to go.

In fact, he knew that he could do nothing apart from the presence of the Lord. But not only did he want the Lord to go with him because he needed him, but because he loved the presence of the Lord. There was something that he experienced in the presence of his Lord.

Look at verse 11. It says, And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face as a man speaks unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp.

But his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. There was something that Joshua was experiencing in the tabernacle. There was something that just made his soul so content, that so satisfied him.

But he lingered in the tabernacle even after Moses was gone. Because it wasn't contingent upon Moses. It wasn't contingent upon Moses' faith or Moses' walk with God.

He had his own faith. He had his own walk. He had his own relationship with the Creator of all.

And that is what Joshua had. That's what he was thirsty for. That's what he was yearning for.

And he couldn't get enough. And he lingered in the tabernacle. And it was the presence of the Lord that he experienced in that tabernacle that made him the warrior that he was.

Able to deal with over a million people. Responsible for a million people. Can you imagine that? In a waste-hailing wilderness where there is no water and hardly any food.

Having to travel throughout this wilderness with all your possessions and all these things. There's no gas station. There's no grocery stores.

Think about it. This was a man of God. This was somebody that was filled with the presence of the Christ.

And that made him a mighty man of God. Somebody that was able to lead over a million people, over 600,000 men, besides women and children, into a land that was promised to him by covenant. He was able to deal on a daily basis with their offenses, with their revelries, with all the carnality that was in them and that just flowed through them.

He was able to bear with it all. That's a lot of people to have to bear with on a daily basis. Can you imagine that? You know, we live together.

They all live together also. That's a lot of people living together. Can you imagine all the complaining, all the whining, all the fussing, all the discontentment, all the carnality that he had to deal with? What do you think he needed more than anything? The presence of Jesus, the presence of God.

You know, he was lingering in that tabernacle. Had he not done that, had he not developed this, had this not been an established practice or part of his life to literally be transformed on the inside, to experience the presence, the power, the mind, the heart of the living God in the depths of who you are, he would not

have been able to do what he did the way that he did it. John chapter 12, John chapter 12, verse 26, Jesus says, If any man serves me, let him follow me.

And where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serves me, him will my father honor. If any man serves me, let him follow me.

We're to be following Jesus here, right? We're to be following him. We need to be sure that our walk is secured, that our relationship with Jesus is, it's real, it's strong, it's effectual, so that we can be, we all need to learn to be led by Jesus so we can follow him. We need to learn to cultivate this relationship that he wants, that we need, and that we ought to want more than anything.

It's a real relationship. Jesus says, If any man will serve me, let him follow me. If we're just going about serving without any direction, without any leading of the spirit or anything, who are we following? What are we serving? Jesus says, If a man will serve me, let him follow me.

He says, If I won't leave you orphanless, I will come unto you. He will come into us, and he will lead us through his presence abiding within us. Childlike faith is what we need.

John chapter 14. Jesus was very spiritual. Did you know that? Jesus was really spiritual.

He was also very simple, but he was really spiritual. John chapter 14 verse 21. Jesus says, He that has my commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves me.

And he that loves me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him. And people stop right there. That's simple enough.

If I have the commandments of Jesus and I keep them, then that's loving Jesus. That's really simple. I can understand that.

That's so simple a child can do it. A child hears, you know, take out the trash, and they go and take out the trash, and you're like, thank you for loving me, son. But Jesus goes further than that.

He says more than just hearing his words, hearing his commandments, and doing them. He says that I will manifest myself to him. Jesus says I will manifest myself to the man, to the woman that has my commandments and keeps them.

He will manifest himself. When we hear that, we ought to be really happy. That ought to make us really happy.

Because we want the living Christ to manifest himself to us. We want to experience that. We want to relate to it.

We don't want it to be some foreign, distant, unknown, intangible thing that Jesus mentioned that's way too complicated, and we just got to leave it in the realm of the unknown and unexperienced. We can't just live the rest of our lives thinking, well, they can relate to it, they can relate to it, but I can't, so I'm just going to leave it alone. It troubles me.

It makes me feel insecure. It makes me tremble because I can't relate to it. Therefore, because I'm so scared, I'm just going to shut it out of my mind.

When people talk about it, I'm going to try not to be grieved. That's not the attitude we need to have to what we don't understand. If there's something we haven't experienced in God, praise God there's more to be experienced.

If we have experienced it, there's more yet. When the unbelieving world sees us experiencing God, enjoying his presence, if you're in the presence of God, you're going to enjoy it. The angels in eternity never stop crying, holy, holy, holy.

They're not bored out of their mind. They're not thinking about something else that they could be doing. They are just totally captivated and satisfied and overwhelmed with what is being manifested to them in the presence of God.

We have the opportunity to experience that here by some measure. And ultimately, that's what we need to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus. That's what we need to really be his hands and feet.

That's what we really need to do his work. That's really what we need to have power to set people free that are oppressed by the devil and tormented with demons. In the presence of God, God is known and felt.

His character is produced within. It's like it doesn't, in the presence of Jesus, you know, you can just all of a sudden, you know, be busy or just thinking about something. God will guide your thoughts.

God will guide your desires or your affections or something will happen. Something will occur in the realm of your mind or your heart. And you'll just have this knowing or this perception that God is with me.

And you'll just be happy. Your burdens will be gone. You'll be able to work.

You'll be able to serve joyfully, cheerfully, regardless of what it is. In the presence of God, his character is formed within. Within us.

And it's formed not because in the presence of God, we hear his voice saying, this is what I am like. I am gentle. And this is what gentleness is like.

I am meek. And this is what meekness is like. I am kind.

This is what kindness is like. In the presence of God, we learn all about that without ever hearing it, without ever being taught. And those attributes are divinely created within us when we are in the presence of God.

And it will just, it will take so little effort to walk as Jesus walked if we're in his presence, if we have him. It will become natural. The more time we spend in the presence of God, just in this blessed assurance, blessed assurance, that's what it is, is blessed assurance.

Joyful hope. Not a hope deferred, a joyful hope, a blessed hope. If we have that, walking as Jesus walked will be the most natural thing to do.

Somebody spits in our face, Father forgive them for they don't know what they do. Somebody betrays us, friend. That's what he said to Judas, friend, why have you come? Jesus greeted his betrayer, calling him friend.

Judas kissed him on the cheek and he said, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? Can you imagine the pain that Jesus felt at that moment? He loved that man. He loved Judas. We want to go evangelize,

we need the presence of Jesus.

I don't know about you, but whenever I experience the presence of Jesus, the more that we've been praying together in one accord, preparing our hearts, praying for the church around the world in this generation and the generations to come, that we would all be united, that there would be divisions and pride and strife and all these things. I have been experiencing the presence of Jesus. There's something that has nourished me, something that has empowered me, something that has given me life.

Something has been imparted to me, a peace, an assurance, a mildness of temper, and also a love for lost souls. My heart has been more stirred. I want to go witnessing.

I see somebody down the street and I feel the love of Jesus for them. I'm not witnessing out of compulsion because I know that's what we're supposed to do. I'm witnessing because the presence of God is on the inside of me.

I perceive His nearness. I feel His love for that person in my heart and I want to talk to them. The longer that we all together have been meeting, I've been experiencing the presence of Jesus and His presence has put a passion for souls in my heart again.

There's been a revival on the inside, on the inside of my heart. And I don't want to sound like I'm exaggerating or blow things out of proportion, but I'm just saying that I am so much better right now in a better place than where I was a month ago before we were praying together and meeting. Peter talked about when times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord.

There's an overall refreshing that's taken place on the inside of me. My love for souls has been refreshed. My patience has been refreshed.

I was growing weary in well-doing, but now I'm ready, you know, to just persevere in well-doing regardless of whatever heartache I have, because of relationships or whatever it is. This is Psalm 73. It's the Psalm of Asaph.

Asaph, you know, was totally devoted to God. He was one of the chief musicians or the chief musician and when he saw the wicked prosper, they would just pursue their evil desires and be totally happy doing it without having any conflict in their conscience, without being troubled at all in their conscience. They were just happy getting all they can and canning all they got.

They just were hoarded what they had. They weren't generous. They weren't kind.

They didn't care about the poor and needy, the orphans, the widows. They trampled over these people to get what they wanted and they were totally happy doing it. But Asaph was a righteous man, a godly man.

He feared God and he devoted himself to God, but he was afflicted. He was in suffering and he began to become envious when he saw the prosperity of the wicked. He began to resent God.

His resentment on the inside began to creep up. I serve God and I'm afflicted and I'm troubled and I don't have peace. I do sometimes, but not all the time.

I've got all these different issues and I've totally devoted my life to God, but these wicked people don't go through anything that I'm going through. They seem so happy. But it says right here, he says, Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world.

They increase in riches. And then he says, Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning.

This is a righteous man saying this. Psalm 73 began in verse 12. Asaph, that's a righteous man, the chief musician, a servant of God.

Verse 12, I'll read it again. He says, Behold, these are the ungodly who prosper in the world. They increase in riches.

And you see this root of resentment. He says, Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning.

If I say I will speak thus, behold, I should offend against a generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. There was this deep pain on the inside of his heart.

He devoted himself to God, but he didn't have peace and rest at times. It was just troubled. He was chastened.

He was afflicted. But when he looked at the wicked, they prospered. And it was painful for him to think about.

And this resentment, you know, he didn't want this resentment in his heart. He probably hated that resentment. He didn't want to resent God.

God, I'm serving you, but I'm just, I'm not happy. I'm trying. I'm suffering.

Are you for me or are you against me? You can imagine the conflict that must have been happening on the inside of him. But he says, When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. He tried to understand why.

Why, Lord? Why am I going through this? Why did this happen? Why aren't, why isn't this working out? Why am I plagued and chastened all morning? When he thought to know it, when he thought to understand it and search it out, it was too painful for him. Until he says, until I went into the sanctuary of God, then I understood their end. When he went into the sanctuary, the very presence of God, he understood the end of the wicked, that they were going to die forever without the presence of God.

You know, if we're going to walk in the presence of God, we're going to be chastened. But don't despise the chastening of the Lord. For whom the Lord loves, He chastens and He scourges every son whom He receives.

And it says, Now no chastening for the moment is joyful. It's not pleasant, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those that are exercised thereby, to those who are trained by it. Why should we not want to despise chastening? Because we want the presence of Jesus.

We need the presence of God. God is holy, pure. And He says, I must be regarded as holy by all them that come near me.

He said, God is, the psalmist said, God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be held in reverence by all who come near Him. If we want to be near to God, we need to submit, we need to surrender to His rod and His staff. King David said, Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

They comfort me. Job chapter 42. Job was experiencing the presence of God.

He was in the manifest presence of the Lord. God manifested Himself to him in a very special way. And this is what Job, how Job responds.

It says, Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that you can do everything and that no thought can be withheld from you. Who is He that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have uttered what I understood not, things too wonderful for me which I knew not. Here I beseech thee and I will speak.

I will demand of thee and declare unto me. He says, I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.

When we are near to God, like being in the presence of God, being close to God, perceiving His nearness towards us creates within us a contrite heart. What's a contrite heart? We went over it the other day. What's a contrite heart? A heart that's tender, sensitive, willing to yield, easy to be entreated, malleable, moldable, formable, shapeable.

That's what a contrite heart is. A heart that doesn't need to be forced or compelled. That's what the presence of Jesus creates on the inside of us.

A contrite heart. And this is what you see being created in Job again. He went through a lot of hard times and his heart was possibly hardened.

But after being in the presence of God, he says, I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you. Therefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. The presence of Jesus will bring us to repentance.

It will show us who He is and what we are in light of who He is and bring us to repentance. One last thought here. This is a wonderful opportunity we have to meet here together every night.

Sometimes doing the same thing every day we can get weary doing it. It can become more of a chore or work. But if our hearts are focused on Jesus and we want Him and you're not focused on me or each other, I'm telling you, we can be really blessed.

Matthew chapter 18 verse 20. Everybody read this with me if you want to. Matthew 18 20.

Let me know when you're there. Matthew 18 20 and I'm reading from the KJV, but I'm trying to translate it as I read it. Everybody there? Yes.

Ready? Go. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Hallelujah.

Everybody give the Lord a clap. Hallelujah. Praise the Lord.

Jesus is here with us y'all. He's here with us. Hallelujah.

Now here's what's so exciting about that. Why did it say in the book of Acts that they gathered together daily? What was like stirring their hearts to gather together on a daily basis? The presence of God. There was a commanded blessing of Jesus.

I promise from the divine living Christ resurrected Lord himself. If you gather together in my name, there I am in your midst. And though I'm with you always, even in the end of the age, there's something that I will give you when you gather together in my name.

They didn't want to be alone anymore. Maybe sometimes, but they wanted to be together because they love the presence of Jesus that was with them. They love the fellowship of a spirit on a corporate level.

There was a special manifestation of the presence of Jesus himself, backed up by his very word of him who cannot lie. The childlike will lay hold of it. Those that trust in him with all their heart and lean not on their own understanding of their feelings will lay hold of it.

Those that don't look to their own unworthiness or their own worthiness will lay hold of it. We just look to the one who promised, who is faithful, who will also do it. He says, there I am in their midst.

Lord, we thank you for being here. We thank you for being here, Lord. There's nothing like your presence, Lord.

Pray that all of us here and all of your people near and abroad, Lord, in this generation and in the generation to come, will know what your presence is like. That they will depend on your presence to be with them in all that they do. That we would all come to know how utterly helpless we are apart from you, your very life, your very presence with us.

Lord, I pray that all of us would not only long for your presence because we need your presence to do what you've called us to do, to be what you've called us to be, but because we love you and we just enjoy being with you, Lord. Yes, Lord, we enjoy being with you. If it's in your heart to tell the Lord, just tell him, Lord, I enjoy being with you.

You are everything to me. My life was without hope before I knew you. I was a mess before I met you, Lord, but you came and you found me and you brought me into your fold, Lord Jesus, and I thank you that you are a faithful friend, Lord.

Forgive me for the times that I failed you and I betrayed you, Lord, but you've been with me all the way through it. Oh, thank you, Lord, for your presence. Thank you for your nearness.

Thank you for being with me. I want to give away all that you give to me, Lord. I want to be what you call me to be, Lord, but I want you, Lord.

I want you.

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