

Promise

by K.P. Yohannan

By recognizing our dependence on God and living with a mindset of humility and submission, we can develop a constant awareness of God's presence in our lives and walk with Him in every situation.

Scripture: Matthew 28:20, Acts 27:20

Topics: "Faith in Adversity", "God's Presence"

Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes that just as Jesus taught His disciples to walk in love, humility, and submission, He desires to guide each of us through our life experiences. By embracing Jesus and recognizing His constant presence, we can learn to navigate our challenges with confidence, just as Paul did during the storm at sea. Paul's assurance stemmed from his awareness of belonging to God, which empowered him to encourage others despite dire circumstances. This awareness of Christ's presence transforms our perspective, enabling us to love, submit, and serve with the Holy Spirit's strength. Ultimately, we are reminded that God is always with us, guiding us through every situation we face.

Transcript

If Jesus showed His disciples how to walk in love, in humility, in submission and in the power of the Holy Spirit through the events of life, He desires to show each of us the same lessons through the events of our lives. Think about certain situations you are dealing with right now. What can you learn from them? How do you think Christ would handle your circumstances today? If you will embrace the hand of Jesus and walk with Him through this life, He will show Himself to you, and you, in turn, will be changed by what you see in Him.

In the last chapter of Matthew, right before Jesus ascends into heaven, He leaves His disciples with one last comment, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20, KJV). He has given that same promise to you. When we grasp hold of the reality that He is with us and calling us to learn from Him in all things, no individual is too hard to love, no situation too difficult to humble ourselves in, no person we cannot submit to and no task too great for the Holy Spirit, because we realize we are on this journey with Jesus.

I want to give you an example of laying hold of the presence of Christ from the life of Paul. Unlike the 12 disciples, Paul never walked with Jesus when He was on the earth. During Jesus' earthly ministry, Paul (then known as Saul) opposed Jesus and the other disciples. Therefore, Paul never had the precious memories and stories to reflect back on like the 12 disciples had. In Acts 27, we find the apostle Paul

taken as a prisoner of the Gospel and on his way by ship to stand before Caesar.

The ship he has been aboard for many weeks, along with others, has suffered an awful storm, with winds of hurricane force. The storm has continued for days, and for fear the ship would sink, all cargo has been tossed overboard. But still, things were not looking good; the storm continued to rage on. In Acts 27:20 (NIV), it says, "When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved." This is when Paul stands before everyone and says, "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me" (Acts 27:21-25, NIV, emphasis mine). The New King James Version says, "the God to whom I belong and whom I serve."

And it is that statement that has such incredible strength. It's as if Paul doesn't realize what they had been experiencing for the past week, being tossed all around by this storm and things getting worse each moment. How could Paul have the nerve to stand before these men, who have given up all hope of being saved, and basically say, "Don't worry about it guys. My God told me it's gonna be alright"? This sounds ridiculous! But within that statement, "the God to whom I belong and whom I serve" we find the reason for Paul's assurance, the strength of his testimony: his constant awareness of the unseen Christ.

Paul's statement is powerful; it tells us where the authority and confidence behind his words come from. They speak of the basis for all of Paul's life--he had such an awareness of the unseen Christ with him, that no matter what situation he faced, he was confident the Lord was with him. That awareness changes everything. It becomes a filter through which everything that happens in life passes. In spite of the situation and the raging storm, Paul's assurance was steadfast, immovable and confident.

Paul knew he was not his own--"the God to whom I belong." Therefore, what happened in his life did not matter; it was not in his hands. And it's because of this strong belief that Paul was able to so boldly proclaim what God had told him because his honor was not at stake. God said everyone would live through the storm, and Paul believed it would be "just as it was told [him]." The fact that he belonged to God and his life was given to serve God settled every issue and circumstance that confronted him.

And so it must be in our lives. Like Paul, we have never physically walked with our Savior. We don't have quite the same experience as the disciples had as they walked with Jesus and learned from watching His life. But we, like Paul, can have that same constant awareness of the presence of God in each event of life by realizing we are not our own. When we live with that mind-set, it doesn't matter what happens to us--"the God whom [you] serve and to whom [you] belong" is with you, for He said He will be "with you always, even to the end of the age."

And when you look up at Him, you see His love. In turn, you are able to love. When you see Him, you see His humility and are able to humble yourself and submit to what the Lord has chosen for your life. When you remember Him, you understand that everything He did was done in the power of the Holy Spirit. So must your life be. Prayer Lord, thank You for the joy we experience in being Your sons and daughters. I pray that You would lead each one of us in Your ways through this journey of life.

Lord, make us more like You. Fill us with all that You are. Give us the grace to come to You, to learn from You, to walk with You and to mirror You in every situation every day of our lives. We love You, Lord, and we desire to be like You. Thank You for Your faithfulness in completing the good work You started in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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