

His Manifest Presence - Part 2

by Walter Beuttler

The true knowledge of God is a matter of the heart, and we can experience His presence through a personal encounter with Him.

Duration: 54:57

Scripture: Genesis 3:8, Exodus 33:14, Psalm 25:4, Psalm 51:11, Psalm 139:7-10, Jonah 1:3, Matthew 11:25-26

Topics: "Presence of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a personal encounter with God. He highlights that while acquiring knowledge is valuable, it is our personal relationship with God that truly matters in ministry. The speaker encourages the audience to seek the presence of God as a place of refuge and restoration. He also discusses the importance of following the laws of God's presence, which govern our actions and thoughts.

Transcript

Now, therefore, I pray thee, Moses, of course, speaking, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee. And as you recall, already God had answered, my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. The presence of God brings rest.

Now, I want to make a few comments first on this matter of the knowledge of God. In Jeremiah 24, 7, God said to Jeremiah, I will give them an heart to know me. Please do not think that I am anti-education or anti-knowledge, only a fool would do that.

Do try to understand what I try to say, and here it is, this, that in the final analysis, the true knowledge of God is a matter of the heart much more than it is a matter of the head. Now, we need to be informed, we need to be well informed, no question about that. But folks, it's feudalism, you know.

The true knowledge of God simply does not come by mere information. I said mere. I didn't say information, I said mere.

By mere information. We need that information. But in the final analysis, the true knowledge of God is a matter of experience.

What I see here is this, have felt for years, that in our Bible schools, one, there is a paramount need, and that need is that our students, sometime or another, have a personal encounter with a personal God. All

our book learning is ever so valuable, but it cannot take the place of a personal experience, where we personally meet God and come face to face, so to speak, and have a personal encounter. I had that in CBI, when I was in my last year.

I had a wonderful time with God throughout the Bible school career. I didn't fool my time away like the rest, I saw the Lord. But I was in the country all alone, I had nobody to help me, it was sink or swim, that was all, either be it was sink or swim.

Well, I swam, that's right, sir. But a graduation near, and I didn't know where to go after graduation, I had no home, I had no relatives, I had no close friends, I didn't want to be a burden. And a few weeks before the end of school, a student walked into my room, a big husky fellow.

He said, Walter, where are you going to go after graduation? I said, I don't know. Are you going to go west? I don't know. Are you going east? I don't know.

Do you think you'll be a pastor? I don't know. You might be an evangelist? I don't know. Well, he says, man, what do you know? I said, well, I guess I don't know anything.

Then he straightened up, brought his chest out, he said, boy, I'm glad I am not like you. And I still see that disdainful wave of the hand, you know, that, hmm, that kind of a thing. Glad I am not like you.

He said, my father is the superintendent of the Kansas district, which was correct. He is also the personal friend of the general superintendent in Springfield. Boy, he says, when I get out of school, I don't have to start at the bottom like you fellows.

I'll be starting at the top. My father is going to give me a church and it's going to be a good one. Boy, he said, I'm glad I'm not like you.

And he walked out of that door, of that room, and shut that door with a bang. And then the full impact got into my heart. I felt awful.

I said, I guess he's right. Where will I go? What will I do? I knew I had the cold, but that's all I knew. And I dropped down on my knees at my cot.

They weren't beds, they were cots. And I pointed my thumb toward the door and said, Father, did you hear what he said? And all of a sudden, like the bat of an eye and the snub of a finger, God gave me a revelation. It came like this.

I had the whole thing. You have to accept that or understand it or not understand it. I can't change it.

And this is what the implication was of that personal encounter. I have to put it in words, but it came like this, the whole thing. It is true, as though God was speaking, that his father is the superintendent of a district.

It is furthermore true that his father is the personal friend of the general superintendent of Springfield. But it is also true that I am, he himself, am the superintendent of all superintendents, including the superintendent of Springfield. In other words, he was the super-super.

And I am your superintendent. I turned around, because I had been sitting there on the cot, turned around, dropped back on my knees. I said, Father, from this day, I'm making you my personal superintendent.

And he has been a good one. That was an encounter where God and I, so to speak, came face to face. And it has been the backbone of my ministry ever since.

I have credentials in my book, but they are not my basic credentials. I have credentials from him. And you like to know what happened.

About a week before graduation, that was only a short time later, I got a letter from a pastor in Long Island. How come? I don't know. Brother Beutler, if you don't know where to go or what to do after graduation, come here and give us a week of meetings.

Apparently, my superintendent right away went to his phone and called up Long Island and let his pastor know that I was there. And the pastor said, Brother Beutler, the people would like you to stay another week, couldn't you? Sure, I could. Next week, a pastor walked in, he said, Brother Beutler, where are you going next week? I said, no place.

Could you come to my church? Yeah. All right, that's good. Stayed a week, could you stay another week? Yeah.

That week, another pastor walked in, where are you going next week? I don't know, no place. Could you come to my church? That was in 1931. And that's been going on ever since.

That is to say, God has opened doors all the way down to this very day. I had a personal encounter with a personal good, and that encounter has lasted to this very day. I am greatly concerned, my heart's in Bible school work, you understand that, that students have a personal encounter, something like Ezekiel, God's same principle.

He said, as you know, of course, the heavens were open, and I saw visions of good. Now, it's one thing to have an open library and an open encyclopedia, and I despise neither libraries nor encyclopedias. I'm a student by nature.

But we need more than an open encyclopedia. We need individually an open heaven, if you know what I mean, where we come in personal contact with God and receive something from God for our own lives. Don't carry this on into the visionary now.

I'm not talking about visions, I'm talking about a personal encounter in some way. So often students get now a vision of Shakespeare, of Plato, of Socrates, what have you, as its place. But in this work, a primary importance is a personal revelation of a personal God in our hearts.

I will give them a heart to know me. Thank God for all the information. We can acquire useful information, but it will not carry the ball in the ministry.

You can know all about different subjects, and I'm sure you've heard that from others. In the final analysis, it's what we've got from God in here that is going to carry the ball for us. And much more, our personal relationship to him than what we have acquired by way of knowledge, though I certainly do not despise that by any means.

But I'm talking about a personal encounter. This is a matter of the heart. Now, I've had numbers of encounters, but we have no time, it's not necessary.

I'd like to touch on Matthew 11 for a moment to point out to you a truth there that I think is quite, in fact, is very predominant here. In Matthew 11, 20, let's see, 25 and 26. At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Do you notice here that there are things, truths, which God deliberately withholds from some people? Jesus had just been teaching, and then he said, Father, I thank you that you hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them, disclosed them, shared them with the babes. There are truths which God deliberately withholds from some people and deliberately shares those very truths with others.

Now, from whom? Jesus said, the wise and the prudent. That raises a question. Who are the wise and the prudent? Some think the educated.

I don't think so. I don't think God has anything against good, sound education in its place. I don't think so at all.

What you have here is an expression that refers to the smart alexes. Now, there are no smart alexes in life. We've had them in NBI, the intellectual snobs, you know.

They come to class and they know more than the teacher. And maybe sometimes they do in some points. I have learned some things from students.

But they are those with their nose up in the air, the know-it-alls, you know, the unteachable. There are people, not in Lima but in Green Lane, who think they know everything. The fact is that they know so little that they don't know enough to know that there is more to know.

The more you know, the more you know how little you know in comparison to what there is still to be known. The more we enlarge the circle of our knowledge, the more do we enlarge the awareness of how much there still is that we do not know. Einstein was, to Einstein was said, my, you know a lot.

And he said, I don't know anything. Einstein. Well, what did he mean? That man knew so much that he knew enough to know that there is so much more he didn't know that what he did know was very, very, very small in comparison to what he didn't know.

The more we know, the humbler we are to get. But here you have the conceited, the snobs, the know-it-alls, the unteachable, the critics. And the Lord says, all right, Father, I thank you that you have hid these truths from the snobs.

Now, people who are uneducated can be snobs, too. I don't think that there's anything to do here with education. It has to do with an attitude.

A critical, snobbish, know-it-all attitude. And has revealed them unto babes. Well, who are the babes? I would say the humble, the simple, the open, the responsive, the hungry, the uncritical babes.

Have you ever watched a mother nurse her baby? Does the baby say, a little four-week-old maybe, hey, mom, before I drink this white stuff, I want a chemical analysis. I want to know the proportion of fat and protein and water and phosphorus and I don't know what else is in there. The baby just goes to work.

You give it mustard, it'll spit it in your face. God, by creation, has put something in there. The thing just goes to work and drinks it.

Oh, God, give us simplicity. And I don't mean we should be simpletons. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, but that's a different subject.

We're dealing with another area now. Do you know we can be so analytical with truth that with our over-analysis we destroy the truth? You go into the area of the presence of God and try to analyze everything. Now, what is the difference between the awareness of his presence and his omnipresence or whatever? You can go and try and divide in there and before you know it you have tore the true truth up and you lost the experience.

There are some ramifications I do not pursue because the farther they pursue it, the more you destroy the thing. Last summer I was walking along the street in Bangkok, Thailand and I think it was almost providential, though I wouldn't want to affirm that. I was walking along to the Siam Hotel from the hotel where I stayed.

I like the Siam better, went over there to eat. And on my way I found my favorite flower in the Far East, the lotus. There it was lying on the side, a nice purple cup-shaped lotus.

Don't ask me how it got there. I can only figure somebody carried a bunch of those flowers and lost one. But anyhow, I found it.

Now, the lotus interests me very much and I thought, I'm going to take this thing and analyze it. So I took it and opened up the petals and looked on the inside and what a beautiful symmetrical arrangement. It was just delightful to examine.

I broke the thing apart, cut it apart, looked here and there. What a marvelous, marvelous organism you had there. And I found out what I had wanted to know, some of it anyhow, some I still don't understand.

But when I got done, I had no lotus. I had pieces. I knew a little more than I did before.

True, but I had no lotus. We can carry analysis so far that we destroy the flower, destroy the tree. No more and have less.

Do without what you like. I'm now turning back particularly to this matter of the presence of God. Now, someone asked me on the way back the other night, Brother Buechler, what are you going to do when you don't have the presence of God? Well, I didn't want to discuss it in the first place.

I was weary. In the second place, I thought I'd get back into the subject. Now, look here.

Here again, we are having a theological difficulty, but I leave it alone. There is such a thing as the awareness, the consciousness, sense of the reality of the presence of God. But when somebody says, well, what do you do when you don't have the presence? Oh, I wouldn't put it that way.

What do you do when you don't feel the presence? That's a big difference, you know, between feeling the presence and having the presence. So I would change the question and say, what do you do when you don't feel the presence? Very simple. Then, I praise God for the presence.

Still, I fall back on the book. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Do not I feel heaven and earth? God is with me and with you just as much when you don't feel his presence as when you do feel it.

You see, you go right back into the word, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Like we said this morning, and thy father which is in secret. I don't have to feel him present to believe he is in secret.

But you see, the Lord loves to do things for us. I think I'd better take you to John 14.21. You know, the Lord's a great lover. 14.21, is that correct? Yes.

Now notice, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, follow closely if you will, he it is that loveth me and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father and I will love him and will manifest myself to him. Now here you have, how shall I put this now, a unique love. In this verse, the love of the Father for you and me is conditional.

It is based on our loving him. Those who love me, I will love. The implication being those who don't love me, I won't love.

Now here we have to rightly divide the word of truth of course. God so loved the world that he gave. God loves all humanity without prior condition.

And yet here it says, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and he that loveth me shall be loved of my father. So here is something unique and what you have here is this. Those, no in the first place, our love for him is not proven by what we say but by what we do.

We can sing, I love him, that doesn't prove anything to him. Our love is proven by our obedience, is what it says. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.

And if he loveth me by keeping my commandments, the Father will love him and I will love him. Now this has nothing to do with the general love of God for all people. This here is somewhat of a lover relationship.

The Father and the Son will reciprocate our love for him as demonstrated by obedience. What he does here is he tells us, I will give such a one the tokens, the reciprocation of my love for him by means of and will manifest myself to him. Now I do my studying with different translations.

I think I have about, I don't know, two dozen or so different translations that I use. Some New Testament, some old, some of them both. And I found this word manifest most interesting.

Now you have, not interpretations, translations like this, and I will make myself real to him. I will disclose myself to him. I will make myself known unto him.

I will show myself to him. I will plainly show myself to him. Now I know what this is, for I've seen the Lord on two or three occasions.

Once in response to fasting and prayer for a week, but I can't go into that. Now if you take the, I think it's the perfect commentary, I think so, and check on this verse, I think it's the perfect commentary that says, based I think on Thayer's lexicon, that this word manifest in the Greek is so strong as to mean nothing less than a manifestation of the Lord perceivable by our physical senses. You can check upon this yourself.

I've had the experience so I'm very much assured of it. So here the Lord will give us tokens of appreciation for our appreciation of him. Down at school around 1950, the Lord had given me a tremendous hunger to

seek him.

I had that many years before but didn't follow through. But then this thing came back, and I saw the Lord in between all my schoolwork, schoolwork is heavy, and I'm out in ministry all the time, every weekend I'm somewhere. Still I saw the Lord in every crack of time I had, especially by night.

And I get up during the night many times, in the middle of the night, for no other reason than to seek him, to worship him, to sit in his presence, unfelt presence, simply sit there. And that went on for some time, then the Lord began to reveal himself. One night he walked into our cottage.

I heard him step by step as he moved through the cottage, heard him turn around, and then spoke to me in an audible voice. And on one of those nights I was sitting there, simply admiring him. I got up about 2.30 I believe, admiring him, keeping him company.

I said, Lord, so many of your people are asleep now, and I want to get up to spend a little time with you to keep you company. And I had the clearest perception of the Lord walking toward me from behind, didn't see him, but I had the perception of it, was as real as could be, and perceived him bending over me from behind, and I literally felt a sensation of drops falling on top of my head. And I instinctively knew that this sensation was the teardrops of his appreciation for somebody that would get up in the middle of the night for no other reason than to keep him company.

Now that happened only once. Tokens of his appreciation. The Lord loves to do that.

Now God hears what I say, and I had saw the Lord for hours upon hours during the night, deprived myself of sleep. I wanted him, sought no experience, simply came out of a great hunger. When one night I was awakened by a man singing, a man's voice singing in my bedroom.

It woke me up, the voice awakened me, and there stood the Lord by the window, full size, in white garments, looking my way, singing two stanzas for me, a song that I had never heard before nor since, and then he was gone. And I will manifest myself to him, and I will disclose myself to him, I will show myself to him, I will plainly show myself to him. This is a wonderful thing we're getting into here, I mean, in the experience.

Now different people have different attitudes. Some love to hear me speak that way, some hate to hear me say it. You have different people, but I just don't mind anything.

Anybody that likes it can like it, anybody that wants to lump it can lump it. You remember in Genesis 3, 8, and Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence of the Lord. Now they made, I think, a very transparent excuse.

When God made inquiry, well Lord, you know, we forgot to wear our bikini, you know. And believe you me, when we have a sense of guilt because of transgressions, it is very, very hard to be comfortable in the presence of God. And there is an instinctive drive, that's not the word I want, urge is perhaps better, to shy away from the presence of God.

A bad conscience, guilt, is not a comfortable thing in the presence of God. And I think they hid themselves more than the other reason, because they felt guilty. And there are people today who have no use for the presence of God, and I would not be a bit surprised if in many cases there is something somewhere out of harmony with the holiness of God.

But such people simply feel uncomfortable in the presence of God. In Genesis 4, 16 we read, and Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. Now actually, as you know, she was not allowed to remain in the presence of the Lord because she slew him.

Now today Christians do not kill their brother or their sister with a knife, but we can do it with the tongue. We have to be so very careful what our tongues say about other people, because sooner or later it will cost us the presence of God. Using our tongue maliciously against God's other children, however seemingly justified our argument might be, is not compatible with maintaining the presence of God.

He slew his brother. I learned a hard lesson when I was a young pastor. A lady in the church was talking about me.

She was dead wrong, and I won't take time to explain because I want to use the time elsewhere. I thought, well, she's talking about me, I'll talk about her, which of course was their own thing. The Lord gave me a dream.

In the dream I stood behind the pulpit, my tongue came out of my mouth, but here I also saw her. I took heed, believe me. Cain lost the priest because he slew his brother.

Jonah in 1.3, you know that, fled from the presence of the Lord in disobedience. He ran away. Now you cannot flee.

What did David say? If I make my first pass of the earth, you are there. There is no escape from the omnipresence of God. That we have with God an awareness of his presence that I for myself cherish so greatly.

That wondrous presence, comforting, soothing, assuring, it is so enjoyable and I just love it. Now David, we find, valued it in Psalm 51.11. I have to move faster because I haven't started yet. Now David here valued the presence of God.

He did not want to leave. The Lord asked me to go to Berlin. I came from there.

I felt like God was a miracle because it was in Psalm 16, those that rejoice know then our Lord's presence a bit. Be thou my strong habit continually resorting. Now while the word prayer and thought is there, David used the presence of the Lord as a resort.

Now you know what a resort is. It is a place where you go to for refreshing, for relaxation, for rest. I have resorts all over the world.

Other areas in the world where I go for a little retreat, be all alone, quiet, nobody asks you where did Cain get his wife, which is an easy question. Ah, recuperated. Well, as far as God for the same thing.

It's an oasis which you can flee. Students, we've got to walk straight in this kind of a thing. Down in Buenos Aires, I stayed in a suburb with a missionary, had to take a train downtown to the Retiro station, the subway across the town to, forgot for the moment, take another train out the other side to Lomas de Zamora, about 40 minutes train ride where we had our Bible school.

Constitution Square was another place. I had my ticket all the way, but there was no conductor, so when I got there and came back, I had a completely valid ticket. They're usable both ways.

Now, I didn't say, hallelujah, glory, the Lord knows how to supply units. He didn't let the conductor come to pinch the ticket. Glory, I got another ticket.

Oh, no. I went to the ticket office, there was a trash box, I took a good ticket, tore it up, threw it into the trash can, and bought another one. Now, international people would say, what a dumb fool, but not so.

Who can stand this presence? We have to go straight with this thing. Now, my last passage, Psalm 15. I'll also boil this down without boiling it up.

David asked a question, Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? Now, different translations read differently. For instance, who shall consort with thee? I like that. Who will be your consort? Who shall find a home in the presence of God? You see, folks, the presence of God is my home all over the world.

I take this home with me. I don't know what I would do without it. Wherever I go, there I want that presence.

Now, he answers, he that walketh uprightly. Here's a reference to the feet. And worketh righteousness, a reference to the hand.

I'm giving you the essence without elaborating. About ten minutes and we'll have what I think. And speaketh the truth in his heart, a reference to the tongue as well as to the heart.

He that backbites not with his tongue, again the tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor, in whose eyes thou takest up a reproach, and so forth. He that sweareth to is the truth absolutely, even though it hurts him, and changeth not. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

Now, briefly. Here is a reference to the feet, where they walk. To the hands, what they do.

To the tongue, what it speaks. To the ears, what they pick up. A reference to the eyes, what they behold.

Now, really, David is saying, who shall find a home in the presence of God? Who shall consort with thee? Another says, who will be the guest of God? And there are laws that govern the presence of God. There are laws that govern our faculties, that govern our feet, where they walk. Laws that govern our hands, what they do.

Our eyes, what they behold. There is no room here for pornography, not in this, not in the presence of God. That's out.

It's out. Anyhow, there's a reference to the tongue, what it says. There is no room for foul, dirty, off-color language.

There are laws of the presence of God that govern the tongue. There is no room for smut. Laws that govern the ears, that do not lend themselves to gossip.

I was on a field riding with a missionary, and he came to a red light. And while he was there, a woman walked up rapidly, spoke to him, and spilled the beans. I won't explain what beans they were, but they weren't navy beans.

And that missionary was all a-dittering. The light changed, but she held him. And I sat there, I couldn't help but hearing what she said.

And he finally went, he said, Brother Beardwood, did you hear that? I said, I couldn't help but, but don't worry, I'll never take it home. And I never did. He would, he would not be a missionary today.

He's a good missionary, but he fell into something. She spilled the beans. I kept my mouth shut.

I don't tell on people. You'd be surprised what I run into. Before the Lord sent me away, well, the Lord gave me some special training on how to travel for Him.

And included was, from Isaiah 42, seeing many things, but thou observest not. Hearing many things, but they heareth not. In other words, Beardwood, don't see.

Hey, no attention. Don't pick up any reproaches. Springfield one year said to me, Brother Beardwood, we're having trouble on such and such a field.

Well, you keep your ears open and bring us back a report and tell us what you find. They mentioned the area. I found out all right without looking.

I don't snoop, but some things you just run into. I never wrote it. And the man from Springfield visited us at home.

He said, Brother Beardwood, he was the high position, you never gave us a report. Why not? I said, Brother, the Lord sent me to teach, not to report. And I never told them what I found out.

It's a wonderful thing to keep your mouth shut. There are laws that govern this presence, govern our faculties, and we need to conform to. And believe you me, a traveling man has a thousand and one ways to go wrong if he wants to.

And it's a mighty good thing to know the laws that govern the presence of God. Of all the opportunities that come your way in a summer's ministry. All kinds.

And these laws, they govern in Bible school. We have to do it straight. Be honest, be on the level.

Down at school we had snow and a pretty hat was looking out of the upper window, a she-hat I mean. A fellow takes a snowball and sends it up after that hat and the hat ducked and the snowball went through the window and hit the other wall and nobody did it. The end of men wanted to know who messed up the wall, who broke the window.

They were all saints. You know who it was? No. It was one of you fellas.

The law of the presence would require that when a student does damage to the building or anything like that, he ought to go to the office, make a fact known, ask the school to make repairs, and pay on the spot. Don't look at me so mad. That's the law of the presence.

Alright, I'll summarize this so we're close. I think you must be tired. In other words, there are laws of the presence of God that govern our human faculties.

And if we want to be the Lord's consort, or He ours, if we want to find a home in the presence of God, not merely an occasional visit, but an abiding presence, we must comply with the laws which govern the home

of the presence of God. I suppose you have roots like we have roots. We had a girl come in one year with a big bushel hat, and she said, where is my telephone? Where is the carpeting in my room? There isn't any.

Where is my private bathroom? We haven't got any. What kind of a place is this? Well, that's the place that is. I think that I shall go home right away, and the dean of women said, that would be a good idea.

I agree with you, miss. We have no intention of governing the laws of the home. And if we do not have any intention to comply with the laws of the home of the presence of God, we might have an occasional visit, but we will not have that abiding presence.

He that doeth these things shall never be moved, shall never have to vacate the home of the presence of God. Well, let's close this. Show me now thy way, that I may know thee.

And again, may the Lord be able to say to every one of us, my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. These are some of the fragments, and the Lord willing, on Friday we'll see how we'll lose the presence of God.

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