
The Presence of God

Sometimes you may feel the aura of God all around you. You may listen to your brother or sister, or even yourself and discover it is actually God who is speaking. Don't you sometimes feel Him nearby? Oh, doesn't it make you feel good! Inspired! Full of life and enough energy to hug the world!

Those are the times many ideas and insights might come to you, and generate a feeling that makes you so glad to be alive and a part of His great plan, you want to shout it out to the world. At other times you probably want to talk quietly to another person, staring into his eyes and pouring forth your heart by sharing precious moments of your oneness with God. Even though you feel His presence all around you, you still are amazed at some of the things you say. You wonder if it is *you*. Or is it your subconscious? Yes and no. Actually, it is God. He is the one who "loosens" your tongue, and helps spill the emotions from your heart. During those enchanting moments, you feel the cloak of God's love surround you. You know for sure that He is present. And isn't that all that really matters?

Many people are simply unaware there is a God, and millions more cannot even conceive that any sort of "higher being" exists. Nevertheless, whether a person is conscious of it or not, God is all around. Awareness of that fact usually helps a person cope with his reality, even the disappointments and personal tragedies. Unfortunately, that very thing is a big part of mankind's problem—we are often not cognizant of the nearness of God.

God is present in our lives at all times. If on occasion we encounter some "clouds," it does not mean that God has gone away from us. Even when we cannot see it, the light of God's love still shines. When you feel miserable, try to remember that God feels the same way. Those are the times it is so easy to give in to Satan and listen only to his voice. Those are the times we seem to shut out God, and refuse to hear His imploring. That becomes overpowered by the words of Satan's promises to us. The more we can become aware of the presence of God and conscious of the involvement of spirit world in our lives, the more easily we will receive answers in prayer, and the more happy and fulfilled we will feel. It is part of our challenge to discover the obstacles; the next step is to accept our responsibility and try harder to surmount them.

In a sense, we are always "on duty" as we live a life of faith. We need God to be with us, and we need to become aware of His presence.

When we begin to love Him deeply, it is natural that we will want to convey His love and energy to others. No matter what our work, we should always do as much as possible every day; when we become confident that God is with us, we will surely have enough power to accomplish all of our missions.

During my early years in the movement, I was the lone pioneer to Austria. I had no one to talk to but my God. The beauty of that time and the spiritual richness I experienced are not something I can easily explain in words. Even though my wife and child were not with me, I knew that I was never alone: God was always with me. My physical circumstances were miserable; I literally lived in my van and fasted almost more than I ate. There was no reason to be happy about the conditions, but one thing did inspire me. The presence of God was the strongest force around me. Other things just did not matter so much. God was ever present, so I talked everything over with Him.

He was, and still is, such a reality to me; at that time I felt Him next to me when I drove my VW bus, and I sensed that He walked alongside me when I went witnessing. When I sat in a cathedral to pray, I looked beside me and there He was. When I taught the mission of Jesus, even people who were not so spiritually oriented saw Jesus standing right behind me. I believe it was due to my intense prayer life that God was with me in such a dynamic way.

Know with assurance that God is with you. Why set up an artificial fence of doubt? Many people who erect spiritual walls, claim they can't feel God, and then insist He is not there. We have to realize that such barriers are set up by us, not God.

Believe that He is there. As you do, you will feel how near He really is. You are the only one who can break down the barricade. You have the power to demolish the invisible structures that keep you away from God, even if those walls seem quite tangible to you. They could seem as real as a dream. Both our mind and heart are instruments of incredible power; they can either uplift someone or destroy him. A person can speak about many things, but if sincerity of heart doesn't accompany those words, they won't mean much. We must mirror the image of God; our words of love must be accompanied by actions of love, for love is the aura of God Himself.

We are supposed to become temples of God. We are much less likely

to make mistakes in building ours if we invite Him to oversee that construction. We feel secure once we are with God. And if God is in us, we feel spiritually free and strong. We feel good. Our heart is relaxed. We are saturated with benefits whenever God is present. If God is with us, who can be against us? We may be convinced of that, yet so often look at only one side of the coin; we tend to equate the presence of God with the wrath of God. The fact that He is near does not necessarily mean we will be judged. That concept of God is outmoded. Jesus and Father have tried to instill a new image of God, and show us entirely new dimensions to the relationship each of us can make with Him. Be assured that you are filled with the tender love of God, and in fact, loved by Him deeply. That side of the coin is so elating; unfortunately, we do not flip the coin often enough!

If you are convinced that God is far away from this desert and darkness you are currently stumbling through, the problem is that you simply are unable to perceive Him; He *is* there. Do you perceive the presence of God at this very moment? I definitely feel that He is here with us. Whether we are alone or in a crowd, in a basement, or on a roof, God must become our reality.

When Father tells us a certain victory is won, we must accept it as reality. The fact that we don't understand how or why God could claim a certain measure of success as a victory does not matter. The difference is that we are unable to perceive what Father can. Yet seeing the "appearance" of God in this world—even through victories that remain invisible to us—can inspire us to work harder at perfecting our hearts, and in perceiving what the love of God is all about.

Sometimes you may feel as if something sweeps over you. One side of you might even get warm or ticklish. Although you might feel it is the presence of God, I don't believe it is God Himself. From personal experience, I feel that when God Himself expresses love, He embraces us from head to toe. Other sensations we might feel are spiritual beings, probably from the higher realms of spirit world. When you feel as though something totally embraces you with warmth and love, or you feel like smiling or even want to burst out laughing, you can be pretty sure it is God. It can happen at anytime, and certainly without warning. Just try communicating with Him, and wait for Him to come!

Even though you don't realize it, you actually experience so many

things that are going on in spirit world. God Himself reveals many things to you. Once the spirit of God touches you, your emotions may run the gamut. You feel as though you cannot rest, and are driven to keep on moving. Even if you physically sit still, internally the wheels in your mind keep turning, and the emotions in your heart keep churning!

Such encounters with God combat any laziness or reluctance we might feel. When the spirit of God comes, it can lift us and help us over the hurdle of the self-centered notions that block our path. They are weapons used by Satan. He also attempts to stop our progress by manipulating our bad habits. Therefore, in order to release Satan's grip on you, it is important to change your habits as often as possible, discarding the bad and picking up good ones. Do you have the habit of praying a great deal? That is one practice you *shouldn't* change! But certain other tendencies such as sleeping a certain number of hours every night, eating and snacking many times a day, being sloppy, etc., are habits that make it easy for Satan to distract you, and at the same time are what makes it difficult for you to break free of him.

If you are moved by the spirit of God, you will be more sensitive to His presence. Speaking in tongues is not the only manifestation of the spirit of God. There are many ways to feel that He is near. There are times when you feel His presence before you even start doing something, yet other times He will embrace you as you work. God Himself may not always be around you at all times. The phrase "the presence of God" also refers to the spirits in the spirit world and the angels in the angelic world. As God's representatives, they can help you grow spiritually and infuse you with strength. They are His deputies, and they are commissioned to minister to mankind.

God desires that we become His *instruments*. When we pray to God or even just think of Him, we are automatically surrounded by many good spirits. Their presence is evidence that we evoked the spirit of God. Through the process of give and take, God and good spirits unite. The spirit of God accompanies those high level spiritual beings, who in turn assist us. Of course sometimes God Himself comes to us; it is when we feel surrounded by a cloak of divinity that we know He is there. Other times we feel "the presence of God" because we detect His armies of spiritual beings surrounding us. How can you tell they are with you? Generally, when you feel good and happy, or positive and full of energy, it is often due to the influence of good spiritual beings. You might even see, hear, or in some way sense them around you, and the environment itself will feel quite divine and holy.

If God is with you, then it is sure that many good spirits surround you at the same time. You have to make sure they *stay* with you. It is necessary

to think optimistically. Envision a heavenly and pure environment. That will help assure you of spiritual protection no matter where you go and what you do. The presence of God will be where you are, and even when you walk into a room that is charged with negativity, the spiritual atmosphere which you bring in will help rejuvenate everyone.

I would say that we are not aware of the presence of God at certain times because we feel burdened by our sin, and hence surrounded by spiritual darkness and fog. We cannot perceive the presence or love of God at that moment for whatever reason, be it guilt, shame, or indifference. Satan tells us something which is contrary to God's will, yet we believe him. It is out of ignorance then that many people do not perceive God.

I sometimes felt as if I had no connection at all to God. It was only later that I realized my empty feeling was a test from Him. All of a sudden, *bang!*—He was back in my life. Actually He never left. There is a beautiful piece of prose entitled "Footprints." Written by an unknown author, it tells the story of a man who had a dream about walking with the Lord. During that dream, scenes from his life flashed across the sky. In each of them, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. But he saw something that puzzled him; during the most difficult times of his life, there was but one set of footprints. He asked the Lord why He left him during those arduous times. The Lord replied that there was only one set of footprints because those were the times He carried him. Even those times I didn't feel the presence of God, I kept on going anyway because I knew what I knew. I knew that although His arms were invisible to me, my God was carrying me.

The main essence of God is heart and love. If you feel the dynamics of love, doesn't it make you think of God? Doesn't it signal His presence? When we focus on Him, He comes.

It was man who turned away from God in the Garden of Eden. So ashamed of his sin, man could no longer face God. Even during this present era of restoration, fallen man feels he must shield his eyes from the face of God. Not even Moses was able to look at God face to face. Even this action must be restored. It is not a question of whether God can look at man, but rather a question of whether man can face God. A child who has a had conscience usually cowers when he stands before his parents. He cannot look them straight in the eye. As he confesses his mistakes, tears of shame might stream down his face. Have you ever felt like that? If you get into

some kind of trouble, you may not feel comfortable looking at a parent figure face to face, knowing you may get reprimanded.

Our relationship with God, however, is entirely different. God sees our lowered head, and because of His unconditional parental love, gently lifts up our chin, cups our face in His hands and kisses our brow, and forgives us of any wrongdoing. God saw our motivation at the moment of our transgression, but also detects the repentance we feel. By once again feeling He is near, we can seek His forgiveness and go forward.

The emotions in your heart are always active; you always feel something. Is it possible that you feel some degree of love in your heart, but don't necessarily relate it specifically to the presence of God? When God is with you, warmth fills your heart. You feel good; you feel like sharing goodwill. Your thoughts and feelings are positive, not negative. When you feel like loving others, you have the evidence God is with you.

God is there. Is it possible to live and work for God day in and day out for years yet still question whether or not God exists? Whether you are aware of His presence actually depends upon you, not Him. What we have to do is to attune ourselves, and develop our spiritual senses enough to perceive Him. It is we who allow ourselves to admit or deny the presence of God.

What is this so-called "distance" from God? Why don't you try putting all of that behind you? If you still feel a distance, why don't you simply use all your energy to walk forward, and then the "distance" will be behind you. If you unite with Satan and stay away from God, your personal problems could become tremendous obstacles and block your way to God. You must experience a breakthrough and the best way to do that is to *break down* before God and repent.

When Father talks, his whole face lights up and he begins a grin so wide, it seems to fill the entire room. Once we are close to God, we will not get depressed but feel exhilarated. Once we are close to True Parents, we become engulfed by their love. It is as if a big wave envelops us. But for that to happen we have to make certain moves. We must connect spiritually, and charge our spiritual environment with ions of positivity. No matter how much or how little we do, God is with us anyway. You say that's reassuring, but you still don't know if what I claim is true? Then I advise you to learn the secret of tapping the unlimited reservoir!