

10 Powerful Ways to Seek God & His Presence plus 4 Scientific Benefits.

3 TEXTS:

1. "You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever"
(Psalm 16:11 NLT).
2. Galatians 5: 1, 5, 6, 19-22 - NLT).
3. Psalm 1 (NLT).

INTRODUCTION

The presence of God has been a constant reality in the lives of His children. From the Old Testament and King David to the New Testament and Apostle Paul, we read stories of how God's presence has been with His children throughout time. But the question is, how do you experience the presence of God today? How can you, a child of God, experience the manifest presence of the Living God in your life?

THE 10 POWERFUL WAYS

Listed in no particular order of preference are the 10 profound ways that you, as a follower of Jesus, can experience the fullness of the Lord's presence in your life.

1. Set aside 10 Minutes at the Beginning and End of Your Day to Pray. Matthew 27:51 tells us how Jesus Christ's death on the cross tore the curtain separating us from the Most Holy place where the presence of God dwelt. Hebrews 10:19-23 explains how Christ opened a way for us to approach the throne of God and draw near to Him in faith. So, prayer is one of the best ways for you to experience the presence of God.

By starting your day with prayer, you enter into the presence of the Lord and receive God's help to make it through your day. By ending your day with prayer, you put all of your concerns before the Lord's altar and can be sure that His presence will keep you through the night. Prayer is the most intimate piece of a Christian's walk with the Lord. If you want to experience more intimacy with the Lord, spend more time seeking His presence through prayer.

2. Make Conscious Choices to Find New Ways to Seek God.. When we make ourselves available to meet with God, we will find Him. Exodus 33:17-23 tells how Moses went outside the camp to seek the Lord. He made a conscious choice to seek the Lord and removed himself from distractions. The result was that He found God and received the remarkable promise of God's presence for the task ahead.

There are various ways you can make a more concentrated effort to meet with God. You can study the Word of God during your Bible reading, memorize Bible verses, attend church services, serve and pray for others in the Kingdom of God, and much more. Make conscious choices in your life that will lead to more of the Lord's presence.

It is important to remember that spending time with God goes beyond the church walls and even church service. It is a daily commitment and choice. As you spend more focused time with the Lord, you will notice a growing realization of His presence in everything you do with and for Him.

3. Identify and Remove Sinful Actions From Your Life. Psalm 140:13 makes a life-changing promise, God's children can live in His presence. But, unfortunately, one of the most significant obstacles to experiencing His presence in our lives is our sin. Sin damages the relationship between a Holy Father and His children. The separation caused by sin is why God sent His son, Jesus Christ, to pay the price of sin. (Romans 6:23)

The forgiveness Jesus offers is the only way to have a close relationship with God and the only way to experience the fullness of His presence. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the areas in your life that do not please the Father. Once you know what they are, be quick to remove them. As you learn to listen to and trust God's direction, you will find that His presence will be far more satisfying and pleasing than anything you will give up.

4. Build a Habit of Expressing Gratitude to God. Psalm 100:4 teaches that when entering His presence, it should be with thanksgiving. How easy is it for God's children to tell Him about all the things bothering us and to never thank Him? If you desire to enter His presence, you should give glory to the Lord through your gratitude for His blessings. Maybe you cannot think of many things to be thankful for right now, but start building the habit of seeking things for which to thank God.

The first step is to begin by writing down things you are grateful for in a journal. Maybe you would prefer to write what you are thankful for on a slip of paper and make a box to keep it in. If you are struggling with an ungrateful heart, ask the Holy Spirit to help you see God's blessings. As you practice gratitude, you will find you have more reasons to express thankfulness than you realized. Experience His presence in your life by developing a grateful spirit.

5. Read God's Word with the Purpose of Knowing Him. God has revealed Himself to us in many ways. However, there are times where God's children are unable to feel His presence. Why? One reason may be that they do not seek to know Him personally like they would a friend or a loved one. Many read the Word of God only to find what God can do for them. For this reason, it can feel like He is God in Heaven, a distant ruler over their lives instead of the personal God He desires to be. Search God's Word for His revealed attributes, and you will soon know Him on an intimate level.

Determine today to begin reading the Bible to know God on a deeper level. As you read, pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to know Him in all His beauty. Remember, the Bible is not just a book. Read it like the love letter God intends it to be. (2 Thessalonians 2:13) Do this, and you will find a love for God and a closeness to Him that no earthly relationship can outdo.

6. Learn to Be Joyful in All Circumstances. James 1:2-4 says we are to meet our difficulties with joy because this will make us more like Father. I Thessalonians 5:16-18 tells us to rejoice and pray in all circumstances because that is what God wants from us. A joyful attitude is evidence of your faith in God to work on your behalf. If you lack the faith to keep a joyful attitude, ask Jesus to increase your faith. (Luke 17:5) Choose now to be joyful in all things, and this will develop a confidence that nothing can shake. Your confidence will be in Him, not in your circumstances. You will find the presence of the Lord in your adversity when you set your heart to be joyful through it all. (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)

7. Offer God Your Praises Even If They Come Through Tears. The Bible teaches much on how God loves the praises of His children. Psalm 22:3 says that God inhabits the praises of His people. If you want to experience the presence of the Lord in your life, join with the angels and worship the Living God. Unfortunately, in the world's current culture, it is typically not acceptable to praise God for everything in your life. It is easy to accept that all good things in your life come from the right hand of God, but what about the difficult things? Do we need to praise Him even then?

We have biblical evidence that the answer is yes. Offer God your praise in the good times and the bad. The angels worship God (Revelation 7:11), determine in your heart that you will join them, even if your praise is mingled with tears. There is no better place to be when suffering than in the presence of your Heavenly Father, who loves you.

8. Remove Your Heart's Idols Giving Christ His Rightful Place. Do you find your soul thirsts for God? Is the Lord a frequent part of your daily thoughts and plans? If not, there may be things in your life that are crowding Him out of your mind. Idols in today's world can be jobs, money, health, success, family, or in some cultures, an actual statue of a different god. I John 5:21 beautifully states God's desire for His children. He warned us to keep ourselves from worshiping idols.

A quick way to experience more of the Lord's presence in your life is to put everything you hold dear in its proper place. Surrender to the Lord anything that has a greater hold on your heart than God. God wants a deep and personal relationship with you. When worldly things and concerns make way for the Living God, you will experience more of Him. Matthew 6:33 says to put Him first, and He will deal with the other concerns of your life. The summary of modern idols are the 5 P's of Idolatry in my book (1,000 "LIDS" of God's "WORD"), namely, 1. Power (Impunity / Macho). 2. Pleasure (Lust and sexual immorality). 3. Passions or addictions or enslavements to pornography, politics, social media, etc. 4. Praises / Popularity ("Emilokan" in Nigeria) or Biblical Nebuchadnezzar. 5. Popularity (prevalent Deputy gods, overseers and popular pastors of mega churches).

9. Surrender All Areas of Your Life to His Perfect Will. Jeremiah learned a long time ago that our plans and desires are not our own but belong to our Creator, the Living God. (Jeremiah 10:23) Set your heart on pleasing Him and invite Jesus to be Lord over every area of your life. Pray for a willing mind to surrender to whatever God brings to you, both good and bad. Surrender demonstrates your love and trust. Pray and ask the Lord to take control of your plans and desires. Ask Him to give you a willing spirit to follow His lead wherever it takes you. His guiding hand upon your life can bring you peace and courage to face all He allows to come your way. As you discover the path of life He has chosen, you will find comfort knowing His presence is with you.

10. Pray for the Eyes to See Evidence of His Presence. God's Word invites us to seek God's face. 1 Chronicles 16:11 tells us to seek His face always. Again, in Jeremiah 29:13, we are promised to find Him if sought for with all our being. What a beautiful gift Christ Jesus has given us. He has given us a way to have a personal relationship with the Heavenly Father who does not hide from us. You can be confident that God has many things He desires you to experience with Him.

In 2 Kings 6:17-20, Elisha prayed for God to open his servant's eyes. Elisha wanted his servant to be able to see that God's presence and protection were with them. Use part of your Morning Prayer time to request the ability to see His presence in your life. As your spiritual vision increases, you will see evidence that His presence is always with you. Amen, in Jesus Name.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude with 4 scientific aspects of benefits of being in God's Presence with Divine Joy in the Lord for our Physical Health, Fitness and Wellbeing. But remember these 4 Biblical quotes first:

- Proverbs 4: 23.
- Nehemiah 8: 10 (NLT).
- Proverbs 17: 22 and
- Proverbs 15: 30.

The 4 benefits of God's overpowering presence in the life of a true believer and worshipping Christian are these 4 scientific Chemicals or Divine Materials or Blessings of Obedience to God as follows:

1. DOPAMINE or Reward Chemical (also called a Motivational Hormone) obtained via Eating good food; Achieving a goal; Completing a task; and Self - caring activities.
2. OXYTOCIN (The Love Hormone) which is released from Socializing; Physical Touch; Petting animals; and Helping or showing Love to others.
3. ENDORPHINS (Pleasure Hormone & Pain reliever) secreted or made available via Joy; Exercising (like dancing and singing praises to God in worship); Listening to soul lifting Music; watching pleasant movies; Reading Scriptures; and Hearing the Gospel of Good News in Faith.
4. SEROTONIN (Mood Booster & Stabilizer) chemicals which are released from Sun exposure; Mindfulness; Being in touch with Nature; and exhibiting Loyalty & Obedience ("To obey is better than sacrifice") (Read Deuteronomy 28 for 14 Blessings of Obedience and 48 Curses of Disobedience). These 4 chemicals and their benefits reveal the intersection and correlation of science with religion! May God give you understanding and bless you in Jesus Name. Amen. Happy Birthday to all Faithfuls. Hallelujah.

From: Dr. Makanjuola A. OWOLABI (Dr. MAO).