

JANUARY 20, 2013

## INTIMACY WITH GOD THROUGH PRACTICING GOD'S PRESENCE

*Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,"<sup>©</sup>so that we confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?"*

Hebrews 13:5-6

The most repeated promise in the bible is "I will be with you". You can see this in the Great Commission (Matt 28:20) and Hebrews 13:5-6 to name a few.

But what does God really mean when He says "I will never leave you". In the original language this was said as "I will never, no, never. I will never, ever, ever, leave you." This simply means He is always with us. That in whatever we are going through — God is right there with us. Our dilemma is that we do not know and understand this truth. . . But the only way to understand this truth is to constantly practice being in God's presence in our life. To pursue intimacy with God through practicing being in His presence.

If you look closely at God's promise in Hebrews 13:5-6, He says "I will never desert you" which literally means I will not relax my hold on you. Then He goes on to say "I will never forsake you" which means that I will not abandon you. So in times of desperation and need, God is saying that He will never abandon us, nor will He relax His hold on us.

The first time this promise was made was in Genesis 26:3 *Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.*

In order to better understand this, we look at the life of Isaac. (Genesis 26)

### 1. Isaac lived in the presence of God and found security in His promises.

Isaac was born with a silver spoon, the only heir to Abraham's riches. But during his time, famine struck the land where they were staying and so he decided to travel to Egypt. But the Lord told him not to go to Egypt, but to stay in the land where God will lead him.

At that time, there was famine everywhere but Egypt was prosperous. Isaac wanted to go there to secure his family and his future. But the Lord told him not to go, but to stay where he was and God will be with him, He will take care of him and protect him.

Isaac, like many of us also experienced problems but then he found his security in God and in God's promises. Egypt symbolizes a place of prosperity, of riches and power. More often than not, we are attracted to places like this and go there thinking there we will find security and blessing. But God is telling us that He will be with us, that He will bless us where we are — where He chooses to plant us, there He will make us prosperous, secure and rich.

### 2. Isaac although a godly man, still stumbled and compromised.

When Isaac arrived in the land of the Philistines, he told everyone that Rebecca was not his wife but his sister. In this instance, we see that Isaac was overpowered by his fear of men and opted to compromise and tell a lie to King Abimelech rather than depend on God's promise of protection.

Often times, we find ourselves in a similar circumstance. When we find ourselves in situations where we become afraid or insecure, we lie and manipulate in order to get what we want. We forget about God's promises and take matters into our own hands.

But when we practice God's presence in our life, we will choose not to compromise but rather be still and depend on God, knowing that He is more than capable of providing for us, more than capable of protecting us than we can ever do for ourselves. This is SPIRITUAL MATURITY. . . The ability to experience the presence of God and act accordingly.



380 S. Rosemead Blvd  
Pasadena, CA 91107

Sundays  
945 AM  
Heart  
Preparation

1000 AM  
WORSHIP

#### Dgroup Schedules

Tuesdays  
700 pm  
1102 E Swanee Lane  
West Covina, CA

Thursdays  
730 pm  
2617 N Parish Place  
Burbank, CA

Fridays  
700 pm  
5124 Ashworth St  
Lakewood, CA

Fridays  
730 PM  
4706 Ivar Ave  
Rosemead, CA

Please contact Rey Bejerano at  
6263545717 for venue changes

### **3. Wherever Isaac went, he sowed and reaped.**

In verse 12 –14, we see that despite that famine, Isaac went on and sowed in the land. And because he entrusted to God his work and trusted in God's promise of providing for them — he reaped. So much so that in the year that there was famine everywhere else, he reaped a hundredfold. But the Lord did not stop there — He continued to bless him and make him richer.

This reminds us that when we look at our situations in life, and we think that it is the most impossible situation there is — we have to bear in mind, that it is not the circumstances, it is not our efforts, not our location that can bless us. In the same way that the land where Isaac sowed his seeds was impossible — it was not how fertile the soil was, nor how much rainfall there was — none of that really matters. Because God will bless us immensely and supernaturally despite any odds if we continue to be in His presence. He is faithful to keep His promise to never desert us nor forsake us.

When the King saw that Isaac was being blessed, he asked him to leave. So Isaac moved. In the next place where he settled, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with him to gain ownership of the well that Isaac had dug. But he continued to move, and move again until finally he settled in Rehoboth.

### **4. Wherever Isaac was blessed, he built an altar to the Lord.**

Wherever Isaac went and found water, he builds an altar and worships the Lord. Even though, he had to move several times until he finally settled in the place where God had “made room” for them (v 21-22). He continued to worship and acknowledge God's power in his life.

This reminds us that God will continue to lead us from one place to another, until we come to the place where He has prepared specially for us — but throughout the journey, we like Isaac, must continue to say “thank you” and continue to worship Him. Thanking God and worshipping Him should not only be done during the time we feel blessed but rather, in each and every moment in our life fully trusting that God is preparing us for something better, our very own Rehoboth.

This is a constant struggle for Christians, during times of adversity we cling to God, but when we are prosperous we tend to forget God. Isaac's life reminds us that when we worship God more during the times we are prosperous, this is a clear indication that we are living in the presence of God. That we understand what it means to be intimate with Him. That we call out to Him because of who He is, of what He has promised to us when He said “I will always be with you” because we understand why we need Him in our lives . . . And not because of the blessings He can give us. Having His constant presence in our life — is the blessing in itself, the rest are just pleasant surprises.

Practicing God's presence comes hand in hand with pursuing intimacy with Him. If we continually pursue intimacy with Him and yet cannot find His presence in our lives, then we may be going about it the wrong way. The only way that we can truly experience His presence in our life is when we allow Him to be Lord of our life. When we take time and make extra effort to get to know Him through His word, when we obey His command to be discipled and to disciple. . . And when we do we will witness His glory and will be able to be witnesses of His glory to others.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is there proof that you are practicing God's presence in your life and that you are blessed?
2. Can others see God's presence in your life?
3. Can others see God's glory in your life?
4. What seeds are you planting now? Or planning to plant now?

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## Works: Journaling task

### 2 KINGS 6:17

**Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.**

Often times we ask God for direction, to lead us to where He wants us to go — but have we asked God to open our eyes that we may see?

1. On the top of your journal page, write in bold letters Hebrews 13:5-6.
2. Below it try to reflect by answering these questions:
  - \* In what particular time in my life has this been real to me?
  - \* What are the problems I am facing right now that seem impossible to get out of?
  - \* Do I believe in this promise?
4. What are the compromises I have been making?
5. Do I continue to seek out my "Egypt" or am I content to be still and wait for God in my "Gerar"?
6. What is God asking me to sow while waiting?
7. Have I ever thanked God during time of prosperity? Or have I only remembered Him during adversity?

*How has this message made me grow in the process of Discipleship in terms of:*

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SUPREME LOVE OF GOD

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STUDY & DEVOTION TO GOD'S WORD

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SELF DENIAL

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CHRIST-LIKE LOVE

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