

*Exodus: Redemption: Their Story is Our Story*

So there was this man walking all alone through a field, and he noticed something off in the distance. He goes to it, bends over it, and begins to move some of the soil. What he discovers beneath the soil is a treasure, and it fills him with joy, potential, excitement, and surprise. At that moment, he rushes home and begins to sell everything he has. He sells all of it so that he can make enough money to buy the entire field. He sells everything, goes back, and in his joy, he buys that whole field. This is how Jesus describes the kingdom of God. He says it's like a man who wanders across a field, finds a treasure, and sells everything to get that field.

In 1937, Dietrich Bonhoeffer published his magnum opus, *The Cost of Discipleship*, which was a scathing critique against easy Christianity or against what he called cheap grace. Europe and America, in the context of the mid-20th century, was a church that failed to stand up against the rise of Nazi Germany, and Bonhoeffer was trying to provoke action, to call the church out of apathy into that particular moment.

Now, Bonhoeffer's book is brilliant. It was a necessary commentary on his particular time, and one that is informative for Christians of all the ages. Discipleship will, in fact, cost something. It cost that man everything, and we often read the words and teachings of Jesus through the lens of the cost of discipleship. Often, we import that understanding into the kingdom of God, and we gloss over the reality that this parable is much more about what the man found than what he gave up.

Willard, years later, in a book called *The Great Omission*, would write that it's not so much the cost of discipleship, although there is a cost, and that's important, but Willard would challenge us to not forget the cost of non-discipleship. What does it cost us when we do not follow Jesus?

For that man walking through the field, it would have cost him the very treasure he found that filled him with life. To not go and give everything to buy that field meant he would have missed out on the treasure. We have a tendency to read the teachings of Jesus and think, "I'm not ready for that sacrifice," but I invite us to consider the cost of non-discipleship. It cost [us] abiding peace, a life penetrated throughout by love and faith that sees everything in light of God's overriding governance for good. Hopefulness that stands firm in the most discouraging circumstances. Power to do what is right and withstand the forces of evil. In short, non-discipleship costs you exactly the abundance of life that Jesus said he came to bring. Bonhoeffer and Willard

We arrive at the conclusion of a long series through the Book of Exodus. What we've been watching with the people of Israel is essentially this tension between the cost of following God and the cost of not following God. They've lived in this tension, not sure of which way to go. We've seen them flail about in the wilderness at the base of Mount Sinai,

where they walked through that season, and they are complaining that it was better back in Egypt.

Really? Better back in slavery? But it seemed like there was a security or something they found there that wanted to draw them back in. Then we see them figure that out. They get to Sinai, and Moses is up on the mountain with God, hearing all of the law and all of this instruction. The people of God fall and go back to worshipping something similar to the gods of Egypt—they worship at the base of this golden calf. In the narrative of Exodus, you see them find the treasure of God, stumbling across it in that field. The text that we just heard read says, "They began to follow God wherever he would go in all their travels."

The invitation before us is to think through this lens. What does it look like for us to come across this treasure? Because most of us think that maybe we are not ready to sacrifice everything. May I just gently nudge you to consider what you're missing. Have you considered what the cost of non-discipleship looks like?

Turn in your Bibles to Exodus 40:33. We'll read through the end of the book and finish the narrative arc of the Book of Exodus.

**Then Moses set up the courtyard around the tabernacle and altar and put up the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard. And so Moses finished the work. Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Exodus 40:33-34**

With all of the instructions given, Moses built the tabernacle, which was a mobile sanctuary. Think if we turned this room into a tent, and we could pack up and take it to our next location, pop it up, and then continue to worship wherever that was. That's what the tabernacle was.

It was always intended to become what would be the temple later on in Israel's history. A more permanent, fixed structure. Maybe not with an address, but we can imagine it'd be like it had an address right here on 1005 Shell. It's the temple, the more permanent fixture.

What's interesting is in the text, between verses 33 and 34, your Bible might have a little paragraph heading there. Those were added much later to help us navigate the text. They weren't in the original language. So the text reads, "Moses finished the work then the cloud covered the tent of meeting," really fluid. It really flows right into that. Even so much so that the word "then" isn't there in the original language. That was added to help us, as English readers, make sense of it. But it's as if the work finished, and the cloud filled the tabernacle immediately.

I love that because what it's pointing to is that God was eager to dwell among the people. It's like he couldn't wait to be right in the place where he always intended to be, filling the tabernacle, the center of life of his people. Christopher Wright, an Old Testament scholar, wrote, "It's

as if God could not wait to be where he had wanted to be all along, right in the midst of his people."

This was the foreshadowing, it was pointing towards God residing amongst the people. It's the culmination of their obedience finally to build the thing God had intended. And I can't help but think the Israelites might have been concerned after the golden calf incident. What if they messed the whole thing up? Will God dwell with them? The moment when God's presence fills the tabernacle, it seals the forgiveness that God had offered to the people, the restoration and reconciliation of their relationship with one another.

We arrive at something interesting in verse 35. It says, "*Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle*" (v. 35). This should strike you as interesting because Moses had been in the presence of the glory of God before. Remember the whole cleft in the rock thing? He'd been there at the burning bush. He just built the thing in verse 33. So he had been in and out of the tabernacle. Someone had to, before the presence of God filled it, go into the Holy of Holies to construct it. Moses had been around this. What's going on here? Why now couldn't Moses enter?

The best example I've heard from one commentator is that it's like a construction company. They build your house, and while they are building it, they have the keys to get in and out. But at some point, once your glory fills that house, it's probably good for them to hand the keys over. The tabernacle was now God's house. He filled the tabernacle. His presence resided within the tent, and it's as if that construction company says, "Hey, now it's yours." It was now God's house. So there's something to this effect in which now Moses seems to find his proper place in how he relates to God.

**In all the travels of the Israelites, whenever the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle, they would set out; but if the cloud did not lift, they did not set out—until the day it lifted. So the cloud of the Lord was over the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, in the sight of all the Israelites during all their travels. vv. 36-38**

In some ways, this is the moment in which the credits roll on the movie, but it feels like you're still in the midst of the story. The scene ends with Moses, the people, and the tabernacle. It says that every time that cloud lifted, the people would pack up the tabernacle and follow that cloud wherever they would go in all of their travels. This is familiar because the cloud has been present before, but notice that the ending is a little bit different. Before, the cloud and fire were out in front of the people on their way to Mount Sinai. But now, the people are dwelling with God and are attentive to the presence of God right in their midst.

So when the cloud of God's presence lifted, they'd pack up. They took that as their sign to follow. I don't know exactly what it looked like, but you can imagine the cloud hovering and then the people walking along with God. Similar to Genesis 1, in which Adam and Eve were walking in the garden with God in the cool of the day. It was a communal relationship and intimacy that we hadn't seen in the Book of Exodus. There has

been a lot of tension, a lot of going and retreating and fleeing. But here, you sense this little bit of just following the Lord's presence.

It won't be without its problems. If you know the story of Israel, you'll know it's not like all of a sudden they figured it out and everything's good. It's tumultuous. But at this moment, there's peace in which God is walking with the people.

The main idea we can take away, as this book closes, is no matter where you find yourself in the wilderness, you are never alone. Israel will march into the wilderness farther. They will wander throughout on the way to the promised land, but no matter where they found themselves, the promise of the presence of God was there leading the way. The question before the Israelites was one that had always been. Did you find the treasure? Will you sell everything to get it? Do the Israelites see the presence of God as their ultimate desire?

A few chapters back, when I was preaching on the dark night of the soul, Moses and God had this tension during the golden calf incident. Moses was interceding on behalf of the people, and God was a little frustrated. He was actually very frustrated with the people of God. He said, "Moses, just go to the promised land. It's yours." Take the people to the land he promised. "You can have it, but I'm not going."

Moses says something fascinating. We covered it in that sermon, but it struck me this week. Moses looked at God and said, "God, if your presence doesn't go, I don't want it." See, the offer before Moses was that he could have everything that God had promised him, but God was not going.

And Moses said, "God, that's actually not what we want. We want your presence. And if you do not go, I will not go without you." The offer before us is the treasure? Something happens here in which Israel begins to follow the cloud and the presence of God because there's a shift in which their eyes see the treasure.

They see the presence of God—not perfectly—they will struggle without question. But there's something in them that recognizes they were better off in the wilderness with God than in the promised land without him. So they must follow the presence of the cloud by day and the fire by night. Regardless of whatever wilderness they found themselves in, they were never alone. God was, in fact, with them. This ending is beautiful in a lot of ways. One way, in particular, is that as we've been going through this series and there have been moments where we've tried to map our own spiritual journey with the Lord on top of this story.

It's one of the profound things about this book because it's not just a story about a particular people in a particular time. It's about you and me. It's about our journey with the Lord. It's about our connection and our journey with God as well. We too have been enslaved to sin in a similar way that they were enslaved in Egypt. God has done the work to liberate us, to bring us through that.

We've had those moments at Sinai where we learn how we relate to God and what it means to be the people of God. We, too, have failed like the Israelites with the golden calf. We, too, have left, wandering in the

dark night. "God, will your presence go with us?" All of this mirrors our own personal spiritual journey.

So, the question that we end with is the same one that we see here. What does it look like for us to journey with God, being attentive to his leading? How do we know when the cloud lifts from that tabernacle? How do we tabernacle with God through every season that we find ourselves in? What does it look like for us to see the cloud, to watch the fire at night, and to dwell in the presence of God?

This is the story you find all throughout the scriptures, but I want to plant us in Psalm 27. The Psalms are prayers and poems. It's the prayer book of the Bible. It's the book in which the New Testament church and Jesus himself, was saturated in. He would read the Psalms over and over, so much so that they just would flow out of him. When Jesus is on the cross, being crucified, the words that come out of Jesus' mouth were Psalm 22. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

See, the Psalms are these self-contained poems or prayers that sustain the life of the church. They often tell the story of God's action with his people. So often, we come to the Psalms as a way to have vocabulary to narrate our own journey with the Lord. You see that in Psalm 27. As we look at this chapter, think about how we can journey with God.

## **Desire**

**The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. Psalm 27:1-3**

The psalmist opens this poem by speaking of two metaphors with the Lord—his light and salvation. Through the lens of Exodus, think of that fire illuminating in the night, dispelling the darkness of the unknown of the wilderness. The psalmist begins by naming the reality of God. "The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?"

Israel was going into the promised land, into Canaan, and there will be people trying to stand against them. They will enter into wars and conflict. There's something about that knowing who God is that will propel them into those moments. "The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?" And then, in verses 2 and 3, he details this tumultuous scene. It can be easy to read the scriptures and forget the tumult in which they were written.

Often, the stories they live within were so tense that you read something like this, and it's poetic and beautiful, so we rush right by it. But did you catch what the author said? There are armies besieging them. There are enemies pressing in. It's not like everything was perfect and serene. When we come to the text, we bring our own life circumstances. We bring everything into it. The scriptures are not ones that skirt the difficulties of life. It enters right into it, and it's into that tumultuous scene that we arrive at verse 4.

**One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,**

**to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. vv. 4-5**

What a beautiful text. Consider the scene in which he's writing. Armies are besieging and wars are breaking out around him. He says that the one thing he desires is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I love the irony because he's probably a good preacher. He says one thing, and then he lists three things.

He says, "One thing I asked from the Lord that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life so I can gaze on the beauty of the Lord and seek him in his temple." It's a fascinating request because for most of us, myself included, when tumultuous times hit and chaos ensues, often my one thing is asking the Lord to save me, and remove me from the circumstances.

Think of Israel in the wilderness as they're setting out on a longer journey. What they realized, as did the psalmist, is that what you need during that time is not the removal of circumstances. What you need is the presence of God. What the psalmist gets at and what we intuit is that although whatever circumstance you might be in the midst of is difficult, you'll realize once you get through that, there's always going to be another hard thing at some point.

Life is not just up and to the right, over and over, good thing after good thing. Life will beat you up. It's difficult. It's hard. We live in a life that's broken, in a world that's riddled with sin. Sin that is beyond our control, sin that we perpetuate and offer out into the world. What ripples out from that is chaos. What we need is not the removal of our lives from that circumstance because that would not be feasible. What we need, what the psalmist understands, is the presence of God. Whatever wilderness you're in, you come to the realization that you are not alone.

*"Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me;" (v. 6a).* The imagery is of the enemies crowding around. He says that when he dwells in that house, it's almost like he's catching his breath. He's above the chaos of it all. He can see and carry a different perspective.

**Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord. Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. vv. 6-8**

Remember, the face has this connotation of presence, of countenance, that fixed attentive gaze on the other. When you're looking someone in the face, you're fully attentive to them.

**Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. vv. 9-11**

I love that line, "Teach me your ways." It's similar to the Israelites in the wilderness telling God, "Lord, we want to be your people. Could you

teach us the way to be your people?" It goes on: *"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (vv. 13-14)*. What a beautiful picture to come through all of that, seeking God's face and presence, and yet the confidence is that I will see the goodness of the Lord.

Moses didn't write this, but you could imagine him writing it, couldn't you? You could imagine him confident of that goodness. Remember that exchange where he's like, "God, show me your glory, and then we'll go." And God's like, "I won't show you that, but I will, in fact, show you my goodness." Moses could be confident of that.

It can be easy to displace that confidence. It can be easy to question God when we look at our circumstances and wonder how a good God could allow this to happen to us. These are very warranted questions. But the answer to that, of course, is much more complex than I can offer.

The reality is over and over, the ripple effects of sin that emanate from both our own lives and the lives around us cause this chaos. The thing that you grow in confidence with as you walk with the Lord, and what Israel understood, is the goodness of God. You grow in confidence that God will use whatever our circumstances are, whatever it is that we're walking through, to offer his goodness and cultivate a deeper intimacy with us.

Then he ends this psalm with: *"Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (v. 14)*. We don't like to hear that if we're in a hard circumstance—wicked, advancing, devouring, wars breaking out around us—whatever that moment is. We don't want to hear "Wait," but often that's the invitation. Wait for the Lord.

How do we do that? Because it's one thing for Israel, which had the cloud and the fire by night. It's one thing for the New Testament when Jesus walked with the disciples and said, "Come follow me." They could literally get up and walk with Jesus. But what does it look like for you and me? We don't live in that time in which the cloud and the fire are with us. We don't live in a time when Jesus is physically manifest in front of us. So, how do we wait on the Lord?

Well, it's actually the same principle that we've seen throughout the Book of Exodus. It's that now the presence of God dwells so much with us that it pervades all of creation. The covenant in the Old Testament was constructed in a way in which there were boundaries to the Lord's presence, but the new covenant in the New Testament, when Jesus was crucified and breathed his last, the veil, the boundary to God's presence in the tabernacle, was ripped wide open. You and I now have direct access into the presence of God. We no longer have to go through intermediaries. We don't have to function through anything other than the awareness of the presence of God.

So how we wait on the Lord, how we walk with the Lord, how we watch that cloud lift and lead us through the wilderness is as simple as drawing the attentiveness of our inner focus on the reality of God's presence. Because often, what happens is that we rush through life so much that we miss the presence of God. The scriptures are quite clear.

God is everywhere at all times in all places. We're the ones who are distracted and not accessible to him. C. S. Lewis wrote:

**We may ignore, but we cannot evade the presence of God. The world is crowded with Him. He walks everywhere incognito. And the incognito is not always hard to penetrate. The real labor is to remember, to attend. In fact, to come awake. Still more, to remain awake. Lewis**

C.S. Lewis is pointing to the reality that the presence of God is here; it's available. How do we then cultivate a life that's attentive to it? How do we become awake to the presence of God when we are folding laundry at home and washing the 15th sink full of dishes that week? How do we become aware of the presence of God? This is the fundamental beginning place of a follower of Jesus—learning to grow in attentiveness to the presence of God in all aspects of our lives.

One of the reasons we have a hard time with this is we've created this false divide between the spiritual things and the non-spiritual things. You come on a Sunday and enter into a spiritual space. You come to do the holy things such as worship and pray. I'm imagining you don't quite do this on a Wednesday afternoon in your office, where you all gather and sing songs together. It feels different.

Over time, what happens is we create this false divide to say that there's a spiritual side to me, but then there's also these non-spiritual things such as folding laundry, coding software, or teaching third graders. We create this false divide. We assume that the presence of God must reside in the walls of the church because it feels more holy than other places. So God doesn't exist in those places.

However, that's something we import into the text. That's something we import into our understanding of God. That is nowhere in the New Testament. The work you do, the ways you spend your time, the homes you create, the boring moments of your life, all of those, as Lewis would say, are crowded with him. God is available. Our task is to come awake.

How do we come awake and remain awake to the presence of God? In the New Testament, Jesus used this imagery of remaining or abiding in him. He used an agricultural metaphor of a vine and a branch. He said, "You are the branch that's connected to my presence." How do we stay connected? Jesus says to remain, abide, and keep bringing God before our minds.

This is what a writer named Brother Lawrence would call practicing the presence of God. It's how we go about our normal days practicing the presence and reality of God. The concept's quite simple. At its most basic level, the task for you and me is simply to go with Jesus. Going to Costco after church today? Go with Jesus. Lord knows you probably need him there on a Sunday. You go with Jesus. Waking up and getting the kids out the door tomorrow, take Jesus with you. Draw your attentiveness to the reality of God. Dallas Willard writes this in the same book, *The Great Omission*, which I quoted earlier:

**The first and most basic thing we can and must do is to keep God before our minds...This is the fundamental secret of caring for our souls. Our part in this practicing the presence of God is to direct and redirect our minds**

constantly to Him. In the early time of our 'practicing,' we may well be challenged by our burdensome habits of dwelling on things less than God. But these are habits—not the law of gravity—and can be broken. A new, grace-filled habit will replace the former ones as we take intentional steps toward keeping God before us. Soon, our minds will return to God as the needle of a compass constantly returns to the north, no matter how the compass is moved. If God is the great longing of our souls, He will become the polestar of our inward beings. Willard

This is a quote I've read for many, many years because Willard is right. The first and most basic thing we can and must do is simply learn to keep God present in our lives. Willard says as you begin to try to do this throughout your day, you'll be distracted. Your mind will do what it's been trained to do in everything else. It runs from one thing to the next. It will be difficult. I mean, has anyone ever been distracted in prayer? I'm just going to project that onto you because that's daily for me.

He says that our minds are wired in such a way that we race from one thing to the next. He reminds us that these are habits. They're not the law of gravity. These are habits that have been trained in us just by the world of distraction in which we live, in the pace of life that we exist within. But we can change. Over time, the Lord can instill a new grace-filled habit that replaces the former one. Over time, maybe the ding of your email notification going off will not be a distraction. What if it was the trigger that brought your mind back to God? God help me with this email. Boom. Then, just go back to writing it. You can grow in your presence and availability to God.

One writer said, "You become like what you contemplate." This means if you are constantly filling your mind with the New York Times, Fox News, social media, or pornography, that will slowly shape and saturate your mind so much that when you come to a place of rest, that's what's filling your mind.

What would it look like when your head hit the pillow at night, and you had created this practice of the presence of God, that the natural disposition of your mind is the presence of God, not the concerns of the day? Although they're real, what if, in those moments, you were able to partner with the Holy Spirit to contemplate the Lord's glory? So that from one degree of glory to the next, you are being transformed into the person in which your mind, like the compass of a needle, constantly returns to God.

Could you imagine what that would do to a life over 10 or 20 years? You become like what you contemplate. If you are contemplating the chaos of the day, my guess is your life will feel very anxious. But over time, through the work of the Holy Spirit, contemplating the Lord's glory will bring about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. You can, in fact, change.

Have you seen the treasure? We, too, have walked through that field. We've stumbled across it. We've seen it. We've had these encounters with the Lord, but often, what crowds out the presence of God is distraction by things lesser than him. We return to our house like that man did. We look at all our stuff, and we don't want to let it go. We really

thought that was the treasure, but when we return, it's like, "Well, this all looks actually pretty good. I'm just going to worship the calf. I'm going to return to Egypt; it was better there."

### **Invite God Into Your Life**

What would it look like to practice the presence of God? Here are a few thoughts. First, it begins by just inviting God into your life. This is as simple as before a meeting, asking the Lord to be present with you in this meeting. That's all. Don't over-spiritualize it. It doesn't have to be more than that. You don't have to light a candle or burn incense or any of that. You can simply say, "Lord, would you be present in this meeting?" As you're returning emails, you can ask the Lord to be present for you at this time. As you're folding laundry, "Lord, would you fold with me?"

It seems so obvious, but it's amazing what a simple step of just inviting God into the ordinary can do. The first step is just to invite God to go with you in your life. It's the same thing if you wanted to get to know a friend, what would you do? You'd probably invite him over. Invite God into the ordinary things of your life. There is no divide between "spiritual" and non-spiritual. All of life has the potential for you to walk with God. It's the beauty of the new covenant.

### **Be With God**

The second is to be with God. Once you invite him, just be present to him. I mean, all throughout the text, you see it. There's the sense of beholding or gazing on the presence of God. What would it look like after you invite him in to just recognize God in the room? You're in that board meeting. You asked God to come into the place with you. And what if there was, just in the back of your mind, the awareness that God was present with you? It doesn't mean that you have to do this whole elaborate thing. It's just the simple recognition of God.

God's presence is everywhere. The scriptures are clear on that. "Lord, may I just become awake to it in this particular moment?" What would it look like if every time you craft an email, cut a sandwich, offer help to a student, or whatever it is, could those things be the perpetual reminder of God's presence with you? God's presence is here. Be with God.

### **Speak With God**

Third, and this one might be a little trickier in all those moments, but speak with God. Begin to vocalize as you invite him in. "Lord, I don't really want to go into this meeting," or "God, this thing brought so much joy." "I'm so grateful that I get to do this particular thing." Begin to give voice to the internal dialogue that you already have and allow those words to become your prayer. This can happen through journaling. If that's more your cup of tea.

It can happen simply through the internal dialogue of your soul, the thoughts and things that already buzz through your brain. Just vocalize those back to God. Speak with God throughout your day as you're driving, as you're going about your ordinary life. Voice those things that are happening beneath the surface.

### **Reflect On God**

Lastly, one thing that we often forget is to reflect on God. So much work is done in looking back and seeing the presence of God in your life. When you get to the end of the day, collapse in your bed, and just before you drift off to sleep, just say, "Lord, where were you today?" Allow your mind to be filled with images. I've tried hard to get better with this habit.

Often, what happens, and don't overthink it, there is a picture of my daughter laughing that pops into my head, or a meeting that brought life to me. There was a moment that felt like it was chaos, but I sensed God's peace. Whatever it is, simple things come to your mind.

God does not often speak to us verbally because God has something greater. He has direct access to your mind, and he will bring images. He will bring these things to your thought life. Often, we excuse it, but I believe it might just be the very voice of God speaking directly to you. So ensure that you end your day reflecting on God. You become like what you contemplate.

Church, where you fix your attentiveness, is what will become the very center of your being. Israel would have to watch that cloud every single day. The text says it was right there, hovering above them. They'd fix their eyes on it, and took them just one step further. Simply practice the presence of God.

One more quote to close. This returns us back to Brother Lawrence, who wrote a very small book called *The Practice Presence of God*.

The spiritual life is neither an art nor a science. To arrive at union with God, all one needs is a heart resolutely determined to apply itself to nothing but Him, do nothing but for His sake, and to love Him deeply...It was a great delusion to think that times of prayer ought to be different than other times. It is just as important to adhere to God by action in the time of action as by prayer in the time of prayer. Brother Lawrence

This means every act you do can be a moment to encounter the presence of God, whether through prayer or otherwise. Do you know what Brother Lawrence did for a living? He washed dishes. He was a monk who lived in a monastery, and his task day in and day out was to pray and wash dishes. He was convinced that the moments of watching dishes were just as holy as taking communion. What would it look like for you to practice the presence of God and to tabernacle with him throughout your life? That's the invitation.

*This manuscript represents the bulk of what was preached at CPC. For further detail, please refer to the audio recording of this sermon.*

© 2025 Central Peninsula Church, Foster City, CA  
Catalog No. 1484-24FC

---

This message from Scripture was preached on Sunday, March 2, 2025 at Central Peninsula Church.

[www.cpc.org](http://www.cpc.org)