



## SERMON NOTES

### We Are A People - The Presence of God Pt. 3

Chris Jolly // 10-23-23

#### Main Theme(s):

The presence of God is the cure and healing for all people, for every kinds of persons; the introvert the extrovert, the poor the rich, the strong the weak, the young and the old, the thinker, the feeler... Every kind of person everywhere finds the fullness of their life and identity in the presence of God.

The presence of God is the beginning of the story – He made us to have fellowship with Him, to be with Him. The presence of God is the hope in the failing of the story – He has not left or forsaken us. The rescue throughout the story – by His presence and power, He has delivered us, and His presence is the fullness and completion of the story (that He might fill all things – Ephesians 4:10). And His presence is the beginning of a new story. Revelation 21:1-4

Every person everywhere has a heart desiring, a soul longing, a mind inquiring to sing “better is one day in your courts” to exalt “I have no good a part from you” to utter “you are My shepherd, I lack nothing” to say “I will fear no evil, for You are with me.”

Our heavenly Father desires to dwell with us, He desires for us to be in His presence, He so greatly desired and so greatly loved that He pursued us and made a way for us to have fellowship with Him. This has been His desire from the beginning.

- The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, ‘The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His face on you and give you peace.’ So shall they shall put My name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.” – Numbers 6:22-27
- One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to meditate in His temple... When You said, “Seek My face,” my heart said to You, “I shall seek Your face, LORD.” Psalm 27:4, 8

#### Quote 1:

Every Christian will find much in these writings to edify him. Those in the thick of the world will learn from these letters how much they have deceived themselves, looking for peace and joy in the false glitter of things that can be seen yet which are so temporary. And those who are seeking the Highest Good will gain strength from this book to persevere in the practice of virtue. All readers, whatever your occupation, will find profit in this book for in it you will meet a brother busy as you are in outward activity... but a brother who, in the middle of all his demanding tasks, had learned how to wed contemplation to activity. For the past forty years our brother has hardly ever turned from the “Presence of God”. – Preface, The Practice of the Presence of God, 1692

### Quote 2:

“Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people.” – Richard Foster, Celebration of Discipline, 1978

### Quote 3:

“Among the many things that work against [our spiritual lives] today, three can be singled out as particularly cankerous: narcissism, pragmatism, and unbridled restlessness. Defined simply, narcissism means excessive self-preoccupation; pragmatism means excessive focus on work, achievement, and the practical concerns of life; and restlessness means an excessive greed for experience... trying to drink in too much of life... constancy of all three together account for the fact that we are so habitually self-absorbed... that we rarely find the time and space to be in touch with the deeper movements inside of and around us.

We, for every kind of reason, good and bad, are distracting ourselves into spiritual oblivion... Pathological busyness, distraction, and restlessness are major blocks today within our spiritual lives.” Ronald Rolheiser, The Holy Longing, 1999

## **Asking and Seeking**

Psalms 27:4 - One thing I have asked from the LORD and that I shall seek. (Ask and seek).

- Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. – Matthew 7:7-8 (also Luke 11:5-13)
- It will be given to you. It's your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. Luke 12:32 and Philippians 2:13

That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life  
To behold the beauty of the LORD  
And to meditate in His temple.

## **Maybe for our present time, we could say...**

- Better is one day with You than thousands of... football, Instagram, videogames, books, TikTok...
- You are My shepherd, I am not bored.
- You are My shepherd, I am not too busy for You.
- I have no reason to believe I am missing out on something better because You are with me

#### Quote 4

“Let all your employment be to know God. The more you actually know Him the more you will desire to know Him. Since knowledge is a measurement of love, the deeper and more intimate you are with Him, the greater will be your love for Him... Seek Him... Let the Lord be the one, the only, love of your life. If we do love Him alone, are we not rude if we busy ourselves with trifles, trifles which do not please Him and some which may even offend Him? Be wise and fear such trifles. They will one day cost us dearly.

Dear friend, would you now begin, today, to be devoted to the Lord, in earnest? Cast everything else out of your heart. He would possess it alone. Beg of Him that favor. Do what you can, and soon you will see that change wrought in you which you are seeking... I hope by His mercy for the privilege of seeing Him face to face within a few days. Let us pray for one another.” – Brother Lawrence, February 6, 1691

#### Quote 5

“But do we actually believe this? I mean, are we ready automatically to act as if we stand here and now and always in the presence of the great [God], who fills and overflows all space, including the atmosphere around our body? Some serious attention to specific experiences of God’s covenant people through the ages may help us to have such a faith for ourselves.” – Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*, 1997

Does your attention and affection draw His attention and affection? Psalm 19

The eyes of the Lord run back and forth across the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him. 2 Chronicles 16:9

#### **Spiritual Inventory:**

- Habits, Practices, and Disciplines:
  - What are you rhythmically committed to that is forming you?
- Time: Attention and Affection
  - What are you giving your presence to?
  - What are you giving your presence to that cannot give you its presence back? That robs and steals and is unable to produce wholeness in you?