

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG102 – Hunger To Enter His Presence

I recently did a podcast about the Presence of the Lord, and I want to follow up with something maybe practical of how we reach to wait upon the Lord and enter into His Presence. It is essential that we learn to enter His Presence; it is what He is wanting us to do, to have us be with Him where He is. That is not off in heaven after we die, it is every day, learning to live in His Presence, surrounded by His Presence. And so I want to try to do something that will be a little bit more practical, rather than just give Scriptures about His Presence and talk about His Presence. How do we enter into His Presence? All I can do is give you things that I attempt – how successful they may be for you, I do not know; but I will just tell you what I do personally, and what I find is effective in waiting upon Him to enter into His Presence.

One of the keys is hunger. There must be a hunger, a hunger that drives you. If you are hungry, then your hunger will focus your will. You must enter into things of the Spirit by your will. You will to do the will of God – that is what Yeshua did when He came. He said, “I will to do Your will, O My God.” We stand in His Presence because we will to be in His Presence. We will to do His will. Now, we know that sometimes our will wanes, so what really is the energy behind our will? It is hunger. You say, “Well, I don’t have really a hunger for waiting upon the Lord, reading the Scriptures, prayer. How do I get hunger?” It is pretty simple: if you are not hungry, then stop eating, because you will become hungry on a natural level. Things of the Spirit many times follow along with the natural level. So if you are not hungry right now, stop eating for a day, or two or three, or whatever; I guarantee you, you will, at some point, get hungry. Spiritually, it is the same thing: you stop eating. Stop eating what is satiating your hunger. You are living off of other things; you are feeding on other things; therefore, there is no spiritual hunger, there is no drive for you to be into the things of God, to find the things of God. There is no drive that empowers your will to will to be in His Presence. But if you stop eating those things which are satiating your spiritual hunger, I guarantee you, at some point, you will get hungry; and the more hungry you get, you will be driven. Your will will be driven to find something spiritual to eat. That to me is where you really begin.

There has to be a spiritual hunger that exists and is maintained. That hunger has to trigger your will, and your will triggers your spirit to respond. Your spirit will move according to what your will is determining to have, or to be, or to do. These are key elements that begin the process of how you wait upon the Lord, how you find a time of prayer, all of these aspects. And to me, to come into the Presence of the Lord includes the idea of worship. There must be a worship that comes into His Presence. There must be prayer that brings you into His Presence. There must be a waiting upon Him that brings you into His Presence. These are spiritual exercises that you as a believer should be spending a great deal of time with. I encourage you to tithe your time. I know we are encouraged to tithe our finances, but I encourage you to tithe your time. You have twenty-four hours in a day, you can figure out what ten percent of that is. You can round it off and take, say, two and a half hours a day, and spend those two and a half hours in prayer, in waiting upon the Lord, in reading the Word. You say, “I just can’t do that.” Well, it is because you are not hungry. You have to first develop the hunger. If the hunger is there, you will dig into the Word, because you are determined that you are going to find the Scriptures that lead

you into the Presence of God and answer the needs that you have in your hunger. This is very, very practical, but it is something that you must initiate.

I think that we have to recognize that Christ had a prayer life. I would like to do a podcast on that very soon. He spent much time in prayer, alone, and that is what we should be doing also. If we are going to find the Presence of God, if we are going to dwell in His Presence, if we are going to stand in His glory, we are going to have hunger that drives our will to seek after Him, that moves our spirit into His Presence. I want to read some Scriptures that will help us; but then, I want to keep this also on a very practical note of things we can exercise. In John 14:1-3 it says, “Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” This is not talking about the rapture, so get that out of your mind. It is talking about the fact that Christ opens the door for us to enter into the house of God, the heavenly house of God. He went in through the heavens in order that we might have a way made for us. He is the way, the truth, and the life; the way had to be created for us to do what we are going to do in exercising the Presence of God. In verses 4-6, He said, “And you know the way where I am going.’ Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” This is how we enter in to the Presence of the Lord. We enter in through Christ. And so as we are exercising this, we are going to find the ways in which you enter into the heavenly places – the house of God, the spiritual tabernacle – through Christ, who is the way into that Presence. He has already opened the way.

John 10, verses 9-10, says, “I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly.” He is the door that we enter through. If we enter through Him, then we are going to find ourselves being able to move in and out of the Presence of the Lord, as He is talking about. And as we enter in, we find pasture, we find our food; we find the reality of living in His Presence. Ephesians 2:18 says, “For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.” There again: through Him we have access in the Spirit – through one Spirit, the Holy Spirit – to the Father. It is our spirit that enters through Him in connection with the Holy Spirit. And we are, by the way, supposed to be filled with the Spirit; and what does the Spirit do? He teaches us, and He leads us. He is going to lead us through the door of Christ, and He is going to lead us into the Presence of the Father; and He is going to teach you how to do this. But it is an exercise, and you must enter in to the place where He can teach you how to move by the Spirit. Remember, Christ said, “If you are not born of the Spirit, you cannot enter into the Kingdom.” So the Kingdom of heaven right now cannot be entered into unless we are born again into the Spirit. It is not a matter of being baptized in the Spirit and just speaking in tongues, and moving in some gifts. I mean, all of that is part of what transpires with the Spirit infilling us and dwelling within us; but do not leave out the fact that He also teaches us and leads us. And where does He lead us? He leads us into the Presence of the Father, into that secret place that Christ talked about in Matthew 6, that when we go to pray, we enter into the Presence of the Father, and there we pray.

See, what we do in the exercise of our Christian life should be done in the Presence of the Lord. If you are going to read the Word, you should be in the Presence of the Lord – because without that, you will have no understanding. If we are going to pray, we should pray in His Presence. If we are going to worship, we should worship in His Presence. We should learn to dwell, for greater and greater amounts of time, with our spirit and our awareness in the Presence of the Father, in the Presence of Christ at the

right hand of the Father, through the Holy Spirit. This is our Christian life. This is where we change. You do not change outside of being in His Presence; the only way of change is that while beholding Him, we are changed from glory to glory, into the same image. You do not change outside of His Presence; we change while we are in His Presence and beholding Him. Maybe this answers the question of why people who are Christians have such little change in their lives, and continue to dwell on the same level and have all the same problems; it is because they are not beholding Him. You cannot behold Him from afar; you must be in His Presence and behold Him.

I love the fact that Moses was so driven to behold Him, to see Him. He said, "Show me Your glory." And it is interesting, because when you read the story of Moses, God was mad at the time. Israel had just sinned. They had built this golden calf, and God was mad at them. He was talking about abandoning them and not going with them into the land. And Moses goes back up into the Presence of the Lord and says, "By the way, Lord, you know, I want to see Your face. I want to see Your glory. Show me Your glory." Think about how crazy that is! On a natural level, when your dad is mad at you is not the time you ask for stuff. But Moses, when God is mad, he doesn't care; he is so hungry, he is so driven in his heart and his spirit to see the Father, to behold Him, to behold His glory, to know Him, to be changed into His image, that he asks – even while God is upset and trying to deal with what to do with Israel, Moses' hunger is towards being in His Presence. And we know that it was very successful, because when Moses came down from the mountain, the skin of his face shone. He was filled with the glory of the Lord that he beheld. So this is the way it works. We seek Him. We seek to be in His Presence, to live in His Presence, to learn to stay in His Presence and not be distracted by the things around us.

In Hebrews 10, verses 19-24, it goes on to say, "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds." So we see this reality, and these verses become very practical for us in an exercise of entering into the Presence of the Lord. We have a confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, the new and living way which was inaugurated through His flesh, which is the veil. This is what we do.

On a very practical level, what I do is I see this reality – Christ is the door. He is the entrance that is being spoken of here in Hebrews, into the holy place – the heavenly place, the right hand of God, into the heavens, however you want to say it. Paul was caught up to the third heaven and saw things that were not lawful for anyone to see; he came into the Presence of the Father. Christ is in the Presence of the Father, at His right hand, and He is waiting for us to be with Him. He prayed in John 17 that we would be with Him, that the Father would open this door for us to be with Him – so at some point, we have to use this faith. We enter in by this faith that we have. The Scripture says faith is the substance of the thing hoped for – so how do you operate in faith? You hope to be in His Presence. That is what the faith is about. And it becomes the substance: if I have faith in Him, if I have faith to enter through Him into His Presence, then I will be there. And if my hunger is there driving my will, the will then will explode my faith and make it effective. So by faith, I enter in, through this hunger that drives, and this will that I have. I see the picture: I picture myself, as I am waiting upon Him, as I am praying. I do not want to pray down here; I do not want to be praying in my bedroom; I do not want to be praying in my living room; I do not want to be praying on my knees – I want to be praying in His Presence. I want to be there, and so with faith, I place myself in His Presence, because He is my entrance. By His blood, I am able to

enter into the Presence of God, and I am able to stand there and behold His glory, and I am able to be with Christ there in His Presence.

We begin to use these elements that we have as believers. They are given to us for a reason. Our faith has a purpose to it. Verse 22 of Hebrews 10 says, "Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith." What do we do? We are drawing near to Him. We are drawing to the Father. We are drawing to Christ at His right hand, in full assurance of faith. What does that mean? It means I am there. I have absolute assurance I am there with Him. And the more that I practice His Presence this way – the more I enter in through Christ the door, the more I recognize that His blood has allowed me the access into His Presence, the more my faith gives me full assurance that I am with Him, having my heart sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and my body, even, washed with pure water – then I am in His Presence. And I will become more and more aware of what He is doing, of what is going on, of what is transpiring in the heavenly realm outside of just this earthly realm. And that is what we long for.

Christ said, as you remember, "Listen, I can do nothing of Myself. But what I speak, I hear the Father speaking. What I do, I see the Father doing." He saw the Father. He was in His time of prayer. He was in the Presence of the Father, and therefore, He was beholding the Father. He was beholding what the Father was doing, He was hearing what the Father was speaking. As we become adept and practiced at dwelling in His Presence, in His glory, we like the Lord, we like Moses, will begin hearing His voice. We will be aware of what He is doing. The Holy Spirit being with us as a Teacher, as our guide, will begin to create in us an ability to live in the Kingdom of God. Without being born again by the Spirit, we are not able to enter into the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God right now is manifest fully in the heavenly realm. It will manifest fully on this earth, but for now, we are to be where He is; and He is at the right hand. We must be those that learn to live with Him in His Presence.

Now, one thing that helps me, personally, are Scriptures about the heavenly realm. I will give you some of these Scriptures, and hopefully they will help you. Because one thing that helps you is maybe an anointed, sanctified imagination – your faith is partially that. I am standing there in the spirit world – well, what does the spirit world look like? I do not have to make it up; the Word of God tells me things about the spirit world, about the heavenly world, about what it looks like and what is going on there. And if I know that by the Word of God, then I can begin to have eyes to see, and expect to see. God by the Spirit can open our eyes to see the realm that we are dwelling in. I do not want to just behold this natural realm; I want to behold His world, His realm, His Kingdom.

In Daniel 7, verses 9-10, it says, "I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took His seat; His vesture was like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels were a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened." We have this picture. You can say, "Well, it's poetic, you know. He came, the Ancient of Days." Who is the Ancient of Days? It is the Father. He came and took His seat. You say, "Did He really sit down on a throne? Is He seated on a throne?" Well, maybe it is a picture of something. Maybe it is poetic. But it is a picture that we can lay hold of in the Word of God to say, "He is there. He is dwelling in the heavenly places." Maybe He is not wearing a white robe, and maybe His hair is not white, but it speaks of the purity. And we can begin to see, and begin to handle what we are seeing. Because at some point, we have to be able to stand in the Presence of His holiness and be able to tolerate the truth about ourselves. It says, "the books were opened," as he went in and saw the heavens. As we enter into the heavenly places, one thing that is going to be for sure is that we are going

to see and know the truth. We are going to have to know the truth; we are going to have to tolerate the truth; because He is the way, the truth, and the life, and to stand in His Presence is to stand in the Presence of truth. Every fig leaf is going to be stripped away, and every lie that you live is going to be stripped away. That is why we must practice the Presence of the Lord.

We are not going to just be able to tolerate His Presence all at once. The Lord spoke to Moses and said, "Well, I cannot show you My face, because nobody can see Me and live." That does not mean we will never be able to see the Lord. No. It means that progressively, we have to become as He is. We have to be purified, we have to be washed, we have to be cleansed, until we are able to tolerate seeing Him. But the Scripture does say, "When we see Him as He is, we will be like Him." So again, He is not telling Moses, "You are never going to see My face." When we see Him, we will be like Him. And that is why we must practice entering into His Presence, and dwelling in His Presence; because it takes some time for the transformation to happen for us. Do not expect the Lord to appear in the sky and think that it is going to be easy to receive. Revelation talks about the fact that people are running, praying for the mountains to fall on them; they are heading into caves to hide themselves. Why? Because they are being confronted with the truth of what they are in comparison to what He is. We in our flesh and our humanity cannot tolerate that, so we must learn to come into His Presence. How do we do it? He is the door. We do it because His blood flows over us.

We see this picture of heaven. Daniel 7:13-14 goes on to say, "'I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.'" Daniel was actually beholding the experience of watching Christ ascend from the earth into the Presence of the Father and be presented before Him, and be given the Kingdom. He saw it; he beheld it. We should behold these things. We should see them. They should be alive to us, and we should seek God to be able to experience what is available for us in the realm of spirit.

Another picture that we can see of the heavenlies is in Revelation the fifth chapter, verses 4 through 14. I will not read it all, but verses 4-6 start out, "Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, 'Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.' And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth." And he goes on to talk about the story and the vision and the image of it, and the worship that was taking place, and how He had purchased for God from mankind – from every nation, from every tongue, from every tribe – and brought them forth to be a kingdom and priests to their God. It is a beautiful picture of what is transpiring. What is going on in heaven is of the utmost importance to us now. It is the place we need to learn to dwell, in order to experience the transformation of our being into His likeness, so that we might be able to stand before Him without being shamed away from His Presence, as Jude speaks of.

Isaiah 6 gives another picture of the heavenly realm, when Isaiah stood before the Lord. People have stood there; that is the way the book of Revelation was. It said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." John knew how to be in the world of spirit, in the realm of spirit, standing in the Presence of the Lord; and then he beheld the vision. But he was already in the Spirit on the Lord's day and was given the

vision. He was a man of spirit, trained, knowing how to spend his time dwelling in the Presence, the secret place, of the Most High. Isaiah had the experience. In Isaiah 6, verses 1-3, it says, "In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.'" So here we have another picture. Again, read these verses, Isaiah 6:1-8. Put yourself in that place. Begin to experience it. Sit and wait upon the Lord. And as you wait upon the Lord, before you wait on the Lord, develop a hunger in your heart that is driven to be with Him, that will not be refused; that will knock and keep on knocking, and ask and keep on asking. "You have not, because you ask not," the Scripture says. We should ask to be in His Presence, ask to be aware of the heavenly realms, ask to dwell with Him at the right hand of the Father. We should seek these things with all of our heart, and we should come and wait upon Him. And as we do, what we long for is to enter through the gate. Who is the door? It is Christ. How do we enter? Through the blood of Christ.

When I wait upon the Lord, I have that picture. I have a picture of a doorway opened in heaven that I enter in through; the doorway is like a waterfall of the blood of Christ. To go through that doorway means to be immersed in His blood, to be immersed in His cross, and to leave this realm, to enter into the world of His Kingdom that He is dwelling in now. And so, by faith, I enter in. I enter into the area of His throne room. Our faith is something that must be sure; it must be hungry; it must be fortified and driven by a will that says, "I will to stand before You, Lord. I will to be with You where You are, with the Father." And from there, I pray before Him. If I am going to be on my knees, I want to be on my knees before Him, in His Presence. I want to enter in. I want to be aware of Him, aware of what He is doing. I want to be aware of the worship that is around Him, surrounding Him, of the angels, the myriads, the myriads that are worshiping, singing, "Holy, Holy." I want to become aware of His power and His might, of His righteousness, of His justice, of His glory, of His faithfulness. I want all of these things to be real to me in His Presence. I want them to flood over me and fill me and be through me. I want to be like Moses, crying, "Show me Your glory. Let me know You." I do not want to do things. I do not want to have things. I want to know You. You are what my walk with God is all about, knowing You, really knowing You.

When Christ came, He said, "I know the Father. You do not know Him, but I do." I want to know Him as Christ knew Him, and as Christ knows Him now. I want us to be able to enter in. This is our Christian life. I bless you. I bless myself. I ask the Father, give me this hunger. Help me to stop eating those things which are taking away my appetite for You. I do not want to be satiated. I want to seek, and keep on seeking. I want to knock, and keep on knocking. And I want to have a will like Christ did – I want to will to be with You where You are.

I believe we can do this. We can practice living in His Presence, and dwelling with Him, and functioning in our walk with God before Him. I bless us. I bless us to do this, in the name of the Lord. Amen.