

The Power of a Presence
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Introduction: There are more people here today than you realize!

- A. Jesus wanted His disciples to know of His presence after His ascension.
 - 1. When the disciples first observed the Lord's Supper at Pentecost.
(Acts 2:42; Mt 26:29)
 - 2. When they prayed to the Father. (Mt 6:6; Heb 9:24)
- B. Do you know of His presence today?
 - 1. Many false doctrines are built on a manipulation of emotions that then makes one aware of the "presence" of God.
 - 2. The presence of God is only known today by faith, faith based on His promises.
 - 3. Other "presences" will lead you to "another Jesus" or "another gospel" which is not real.

I. The significance of a presence

- A. What is a presence?
 - 1. The state or fact of being present; current existence or occurrence.
 - 2. Immediate proximity in time or space.
 - 3. The diplomatic, political, or military influence of a nation in a foreign country.
- B. It involves consciousness.
 - 1. It is easy to know when someone is physically present.
 - 2. There can be a presence without a physical one. (1 Cor 5:3; 1 Thess 2:17)
 - 3. The presence of the Lord is greater than this. (Psa 139:7-10)
 - a. Jonah learned this lesson! (Jonah 1:3)
 - b. Our very spirit knows this. (Ps 19:1-4)
- C. It involves some knowledge of the one who casts the presence.
 - 1. This presence has a greater force when we know the character or significance of the one we are before.
 - 2. The great cloud of witnesses are significant only to those who know them.
(Heb 11:39-12:1)
 - 3. Who is present with you here today?

II. The power of the presence of God

- A. The actual presence of the divine is awesome. (Ex 33:20-23)
 - 1. Isaiah reacted immediately when he perceived he was in God's presence.
(Isa 6:1-5)
 - 2. God wants all to fear His presence! (Isa 64:3)
- B. We must keep our hearts attuned and tender to respect this presence!
 - 1. God's people became hardened to it. (Jer 5:22-23)
 - 2. The Gentile world already has. (Rom 1:18-20, 28)
 - 3. This is Satan's only weapon against the powerful presence of God, a hardened conscience.
- C. Moses would not leave without the assurance of God's presence. (Ex 33:14-16)
 - 1. This presence (fellowship) is something the world does not have.

2. This presence requires separation! (**Ps 101:7**)

III. The power of the presence of men

- A. The rulers of this world demand and receive respect.
 - 1. Esther knew the significance of access to the king. (**Esther 1:14; 4:16**)
 - 2. Before a king there is a way to dress, speak and act.
- B. The Pharisees were more aware of the presence of men than they were of God.
 - 1. Jesus knew the motivation behind their piety. (**Mt 6:1-2**)
 - 2. They used arguments that were intended to impress men. (**Lk 20:26; 1-8**)
 - 3. How many writers and speakers have used the fear of men to persuade another to accept their teachings?
- C. Paul wanted Christians to grow where the physical presence was not as needed.
 - 1. There is a wonderful power being in the presence of faithful Christians. (**Heb 10:23-25**)
 - 2. There comes a point where one has faith and zeal even when others are not there! (**Gal 4:18-20**)
 - a. Many parents have sadly found this out when their child moves away.
 - b. There is a great encouragement when this God centered faith is confirmed and grows! (**Phil 2:12**)
- D. Which presence is greater for you? (**Ps 31:19-20**)
 - 1. This should be a very serious question we ask ourselves!
 - 2. I am concerned when we focus on other men, churches, papers and not on God.
 - 3. Belshazzar was concerned about “the thousand.” That perspective changed radically when it was too late. (**Dan 5:1**)

IV. Using these presences for our good

- A. Let God’s presence build you up.
 - 1. God will defeat your enemies. (**Ps 9:3**)
 - 2. You will find joy. (**Ps 16:11**)
 - 3. You will find justification. (**Ps 17:2**)
 - 4. You will have peace and blessing in the presence of your enemies. (**Ps 23:5**)
- B. Be aware of the presence of faithful men.
 - 1. Seek their actual presence.
 - 2. Let our assemblies be that which build faith and destroy sin. (**1 Tim 5:20**)
 - 3. Let good influence always be with you. (**2 Cor 13:2, 10**)
- C. Let your hope be fully set on one day being in the presence of the Lord.
 - 1. Are you running the race? (**Heb 12:1-3**)
 - 2. How do we find the strength to finish? What will make heaven a blessing for us?

Conclusion: Are you serving God or merely offering eye service? (**Eph 6:6; Col 3:22**)

- A. One day you will know with a certainty!
- B. Those who loved the presence of men above God will spend an eternity away from His presence. (**2 Thess 1:9**)
- C. Who is present with you today?