



Presence – The Essence of the Kingdom

Hello everyone. Welcome to “Notes from the Presence.” This week I have been thinking and pondering about none other than the presence of God. There have been two particular scripture verses rolling around in my heart but before I share them, I would like to provide a bit of context.

The presence of God is His glory. There are three or four words in the old testament that are pretty much synonymous when it comes to this concept and the presence is also now our daily bread. Lets talk about the Bread of the Presence for a minute. The priests used to bake this bread fresh every week and put it in the sanctuary on a table with incense. They were the only ones allowed to eat it and then only once a week. In the Lord's Prayer, we are now instructed to pray "give us this day, our daily bread." Because we are all now kings and priests in the kingdom of God, we get to feast on His presence daily, it is our daily bread. Anyhow, the synonymous words are the presence, the glory, the face of God, and the goodness of God. These four things are closely related. The glory of God is His presence. Also, when Moses asked to see God's glory, God caused His goodness to pass before him. Further to that, the Hebrew word for "presence" and "face" is exactly the same. When we seek God's face, we seek His presence, His glory, and His goodness.

The foundation of our entire universe is actually built on God's goodness. Every time God created something, He saw that it was "good." The first thing that He released into our creation was "light." This light was none other than the glory of God. Remember, at this point in time, there was no sun, moon, or stars. God literally released His glory to light up His creation until the fourth day of creation when He transferred the job of lighting to the sun and moon. In the new creation, the new heaven and earth will once again be illuminated by His glory, the light of the glory of His face.

Revelation 21:23 *And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.*

The interesting thing about God's glory and presence to me is this: there is a distinct line between the heavenly world, and the earthly world. There are natural things of this world that we can't take to heaven when we go. Then there are things in heaven that don't come here. There is also a different way of seeing. We see this world with our natural eyes, and the heavenly world with our spiritual eyes. But there is one thing that can co-exist in both worlds ... the glory and presence of God. It was here in the beginning. God spoke light into a new realm, and then started speaking into the environment of that light, creating the world in which we live. It has always been the plan of God for the earth to be filled with the glory of the Lord.

So what exactly is the presence of God, or in other words, His glory. It is none other than the atmosphere of heaven. It is the presence of the face of our Father God, and it lights and sustains all of heaven and earth. It is the radiance that comes from His being and His face. Sometimes it manifests as smoke or a cloud, sometimes as a fire, sometimes as a radiance, or a weighty presence in a room. It is atmosphere and it proceeds from God Himself. Without it, our universe ceases to exist.

I would like to make a very specific statement in this regard and this is kind of where I wanted to go with all of this today. I will set this statement apart from the rest of this blog in a separate paragraph - it is my quote of the day.

I have come to know the presence and glory of God as the essence of the Kingdom of heaven.

When we worship God, it increases in our environment here on earth because He inhabits the praises. It is the same in heaven. When worship happens there, the glory of God is released in greater measure as well. If you don't believe me, just read the book of Revelation. When we are in an environment of the presence of God here on earth, as it is in heaven, all things are possible to us. This is the reason why the Lord's prayer starts with praise and worship, magnifying the name of the Lord, and then proceeds with kingdom declarations on earth as in heaven, then continues with asking God for the daily bread of His presence, and ends with declaring that the kingdom, the power, and the "glory" all belong to Him. So now for my two scripture verses that I have been pondering for the past week ... are you ready. They might seem a bit strange at first, but hang in there with me:

Matthew 13:44 *The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

Matthew 13:45-46 *Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

OK, so there are a lot of people that ask me, "Dean, why are you so stuck on the presence of God? Why is it so important to you?" To that question, I give this answer. To me, because the presence of God is the essence of His kingdom, the presence is the treasure hidden in the field. It is also the pearl of great price. Once I discovered the essence of the kingdom of God in His presence, to me it was worth selling everything and dedicating the rest of my life to. Honestly, when I say that nothing matters more to me, I really mean it. I have given up all else in the quest for the kingdom of God. His presence is the treasure and the pearl. It has given a whole new meaning to the verse:

Matthew 6:33 *But seek first His kingdom His righteousness, and all of these things shall be added to you.*

When I seek the kingdom of God, I seek His presence, His face, His goodness, and His glory. In His presence all things are found. It is the essence of His kingdom.

Thank you for reading. Jesus is real - seek first His presence!