



WAYS OF LIFE

²⁰ But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,
²¹ keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

Jude v20-21



Instagram is

God, who is everywhere, never leaves us. Yet He seems sometimes to be present, sometimes absent. If we do not know Him well, we do not realize that He may be more present to us when He is absent than when He is present.

- Thomas Merton

To stay in God's love is to remain in his presence. It is for us to be present to him as often as he is present to us.

1

God's love and grace - in Jesus - through the Holy Spirit
makes His presence available to all.

What is directly revealed to us...is not truths or doctrines about God but God himself. Our doctrines about God are always secondary to our direct finding of God in the realities of our experience, and are never wholly adequate to that finding or wholly exhaustive of its meaning. God does not just communicate with us: He does something far better - He communes with us. Not the communication of propositions but the communion of spirits is the last word about divine revelation.

- John Baillie

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people...

Titus 2v11

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10v19-23

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5v1-5

This divine love does not refer to the propositional truth that God loves us, or this historical demonstration of God's love on the cross, or God's love at an abstract, heavenly distance, but rather, the psychological tangible love of God that has objectively flooded the core of human personality via the person of the Spirit.

- Dr. Steve Porter

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying,
"Abba, Father."

Galatians 4v6

2

Followers of Jesus are transformed by God's presence.

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is fixed on you, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26v3

Two examples of God's presence and its transformative power:

Joy and Love

3

Followers of Jesus can receive or resist God's presence.

God's fully available presence and meaning can be resisted and received by persons to greater and lesser degrees.

- Dr. Steve Porter

Presence Resisted:

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Galatians 5v16-17

Presence Received:

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith –that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3v14-19

4

Followers of Jesus can learn to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in order to increase their openness to God's presence.

Authentic transformation is possible if we are willing to do one thing and that is to arrange our lives around the kind of practices and life Jesus led to be consistently receiving power and love from the Father.

- Dallas Willard

How can we increase our openness to God's presence in order to receive his presence more fully? (see Jude v20-21)

Build up your faith.

Pray in the Spirit.

Look forward to the fulfillment of mercy in Jesus.

*The way of God's presence is to consistently know
and exist in the perfect love of Jesus.*

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Jesus is the way we come to God. Jesus is the way God comes to us. And not first one and then the other but both at the same time. Not God's way to us on Sundays and our way to God on weekdays. It is a two-lane road. Much mischief has been perpetrated in the Christian community by not keeping both lanes open. The road up and the road down are the same road.

- Eugene Peterson