

The Glory Presence of the Lord

I would like to commence by repeating a few of the statements and questions from the last time I preached here:

*"... it takes time to get to know our Lord. Not just finding out a few facts **about** Him, but **knowing** Him intimately, personally. The questions we should ask of ourselves are:*

- *How well do I know Him? – He longs to reveal Himself ... do I long to know Him*
- *How much time do I devote to our relationship? – a matter of priorities.*
- *What do I do with the knowledge I have of Him? – a response of love and obedience.*

The more you become entwined and one with Him, the more you are conformed to His image, the more He will release His glorious presence to be manifested to you, in you and through you.

By listening and knowing Him and obeying Him, let Jesus lead you in His triumph in every situation so the fragrant aroma of Him may be known to everyone everywhere you go."

His glory presence

Today we take up and look further into the statement:

*The more you become entwined and one with Him, the more you are conformed to His image, the more He will release **His glorious presence to be manifested** to you, in you and through you.*

Nu 14:21 ... *"indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord.*

I believe the Father's desire for us, His church, His people, His sons and daughters, is that we experience personally (as well as corporately), and daily, His **glory presence**.

God is everywhere. His presence is universal. He is omnipresent. But I think I am correct to say that for most of us the glory presence of God, the manifestation of His presence, is not a daily experience.

You see, the sad thing is that while we can be spot on theologically, we can have lots of head knowledge of the Word, be theologically correct, and be able to quote the scriptures ad infinitum, but be empty spiritually.

A personal, intimate relationship with God is what He wants of us. He longs for people with a heart aflame for Him – for His revealed presence.

2 Chr 16:9 ... *"For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His."*

He wants us to move from a state of simply just having the head knowledge of knowing He is omnipresent, 'somewhere' out there where we can 'pray' to Him, to a daily state of gazing into His heart, meeting with Him and seeing and knowing Him intimately with the eyes of our hearts, and having Him reveal Himself to us and for us to experience His glory presence.

So for a few minutes let us look at some passages of scripture which speak of the 'glory presence' of God, bearing in mind what Rom 15:4 says ... "*For whatever was written in earlier times was written **for our instruction**, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*" While the Old Testament rituals no longer apply, the principles behind them do.

The place of first mention of the 'glory of God' – where the Hebrew word (כבוד) *Kabod* is used, which means "weight" or "important" – is found in Exodus where it refers to the supernatural provision of manna.

Ex 16:7 ... "*and in the morning you will **see** the glory of the Lord ...*"

So here where it is first used in connection with God it refers to something **tangible**.

Ex 29:38-46 ... "*Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one year old lambs **each day, continuously**.³⁹ The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; ...⁴² It shall be a **continual burnt offering throughout your generations** at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the Lord, **where I will meet with you, to speak to you there**.⁴³ I will meet there with the sons of Israel, and it shall be consecrated by **My glory**.⁴⁴ I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to Me. ⁴⁵ I will **dwell** among the sons of Israel and will be their God. ⁴⁶ They shall **know** that I am the Lord their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might **dwell among them**; I am the Lord their God."*

Burnt Offering – (עלה) "olah" – means 'whole burnt offering' – It was an offering to be wholly and entirely consumed and the smoke ascend to God. It symbolises **the entire surrender to God** of the individual or congregation. God's acceptance gave renewal and sanctification to a course of life pleasing to God. It had no reference to atonement or forgiveness of sin. It could only be offered by those who retained their standing in the covenant.

1 Pet 2:5 ... "*you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to **offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God** through Jesus Christ.*"

Heb 13:15 ... "*Through Him then, let us **continually** offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.*" (compare with Psalm 50:14, 23)

Lev 9:1-6 ... "*Now it came about on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel;² and he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a calf, a bull, for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both without defect, and offer them before the Lord.³ Then to the sons of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Take a male goat for a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both one year old, without defect, for a burnt offering,⁴ and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before the Lord, and a grain offering mixed with oil; for **today the Lord will appear to you.**'"⁵ So they took what Moses had commanded to the front of the tent of meeting, and the whole congregation came near and stood before the Lord.⁶ Moses said, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded you to do, **that the glory of the Lord may appear to you.**"*

Sin Offering – (חטאת) “ghattat” – means ‘offence’ – This offering was for a general ‘clean up’ for sins committed unintentionally, or in error. This offering took place for all the people at festivals such as New Moon, Passover, Pentecost, Feast of trumpets, Feast of Tabernacles and Day of Atonement.

Peace Offering – (שלם) “shelem” – means ‘sacrifice of peace’ or ‘a sacrifice for alliance or friendship’. This was offered in communion with God.

Grain Offering – (מנחה) – “minghah” – means ‘a gift, tribute, grain offering’.

Peace offerings and grain offerings were presented along with, in association with, the main sin and burnt offerings. They simply affirmed the person’s undivided loyalty and love for God.

So if we live in a continual attitude of entire surrender before God (burnt offering) and ask for forgiveness of anything we have done unintentionally or by mistake (sin offering) and in accordance with Ps 139:23-24 cry out ...*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way”*, and offer a sacrifice of praise and worship to Him in love (peace and grain offerings), we can expect to experience the glory presence of God. True worship precipitates the glory presence of God.

Now let’s hear the dialogue between Moses and God as Moses intercedes:

Ex 33:7-16 ... *“Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp ...*
... ⁹ *Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the Lord would speak with Moses ...*
... ¹¹ *Thus **the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.** When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent ...*¹³ *Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, **let me know Your ways that I may know You,** so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.”*¹⁴ *And He said, “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.”*¹⁵ *Then he said to Him, “If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. ¹⁶ For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? **Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?**”*

Oh church, the Father’s heart cry is that we draw near to Him in total surrender and commune with Him continually so that He can manifest His glory presence so that we, His people will be distinguishable as being His ambassadors ... as the light of the world ... as the salt of the earth ... to bring them the gospel of the good news ... to set captives free, to heal the sick, to proclaim the gospel and bring Christ to a lost world.

Lev 9:23-24 ... *“Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting. When they came out and blessed the people, **the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people.**”*²⁴ *Then fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.”*

Do we want to see the glory presence and power of God change our nation? Dear friends, there is only one way this will happen ... when we get serious about God and diligently seek His face.

The **two main things** the church needs more than anything else – and what should consume us and be our prime prayer focus are:

1. A restoration of absolute surrender and continual seeking to **know God**.

We need a vision of the Most High God. A returning of the glory of God to the church is the primary imperative. When His glory returns more souls will be converted, sick healed and people delivered – God’s glory seen upon the church, His people, will draw sinners to salvation like we’ve never seen before. There’s been bits and pieces of this from time to time – but not continually.

That’s what the Early Church was all about. Continually in prayer, seeking God and allowing His manifested glory presence upon His people to add thousands daily, to do the miraculous, to be directed by the Spirit with great effect.

- Look at Peter’s shadow falling on the sick and the sick being healed – the power of Gods glory presence on the apostles at work.
- Look at Peter and John on their way to pray and the man lame from birth at the Gate Beautiful is healed miraculously, and thousands come to Christ that day – the power of Gods glory presence on the apostles at work.
- Look at Stephen (Acts 6 and 7) ... 6:15 ... *“And fixing their gaze on him (Stephen v3 ... “a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit”), all who were sitting in the Council saw his face like the face of an angel...”* – That’s the glory presence of God shining on him.
- Look at Philip (Acts 8) - An angel of the Lord speaks to Him to go to the road to Gaza where the Holy Spirit directs him to explain the way of salvation to the Ethiopian eunuch. The eunuch is saved, baptised and v39 ... *“When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch no longer saw him, but went on his way rejoicing”* That’s the glory power of God in action – why? Because Philip was 100% devoted to God – he knew God and God’s manifest presence was on, with and in him!
- Look at Paul the greatest of the apostles as he gives us the secret to a life upon which the glory presence of God rests when he declares (Phil 1:21; 3:8-11) ... *“for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” ... “I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of **knowing Christ Jesus** my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so **that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him**”... ... “that I may **know Him** and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”* Paul also wrote Rom 6:4 ... *“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the **glory of the Father**, so we too might walk in newness of life.”*

Then we should pray:

2. That the church be delivered from its Babylonian captivity.

Israel in Babylon did not cease to be God's people ... they were just out of the will of God. Self-centred. Compromised. Powerless. Ineffectual.

Has God not just become a "cheap god" watered down by our fancies and self focus? Do we practice **sacrificial worship** – time with Him that costs us time and effort especially when we just don't feel like it – or do we just flop down and remain at ease? Justifying our lack of diligence in seeking to know Him with statements like, "I'm too tired", or "I just have to do this or that first". Yet strangely we can happily spend hours in front of the TV!

Fornication with the world and its values and ways has put the church into Babylonian captivity. Trying to base "church" on the ideals, techniques and systems of the world rather than on worship of God. Sadly with a very few exceptions here and there, most of the church around the world consists of people whose focus is self and not God. The point of reference is self rather than Christ.

Such people want instant everything. God is watered down to being a 'slot machine' for our convenience. Throw in a self-centred prayer, use the "in Jesus name amen" lever and expect a miracle or blessing.

For many such people the order of the day is a "once an week whip up" in so called worship – sing a song or two over, and over, and over, and over again to try and get the glory presence of God manifested ... Sorry, but it's not going to happen. That's not God's way to see His manifest presence.

This kind of attitude and much of the so called prayer that goes up is nothing short of trying to **lobby God** to do our will. I have this program all figured out – it's all good and I can find Bible references to support it – so God please bless it. I'm in trouble so God please get me out of trouble. We'll even have an all night prayer meeting to get God onto our side – well, this is a small price to pay to get the power of God to do what you want, isn't it? God's not going to answer that. He won't be lobbied to do our will – ever.

We cannot continue to go out a try and win souls, or do any of the good things we see in the Bible, at the expense of the glory of God. We cannot cheat God. We cannot operate apart from the power of God and expect eternal results. If we try this all we will accomplish is making "religious proselytes" – not true Christians. If our ministry efforts are not supported by the power of God's glory presence they will be pretty much in vain. That simply means we need much time in His presence getting to know Him, His ways, His will, His plans and His encouragement before we go out.

I don't want to be numbered with those Jesus spoke of in Matt 7:22-23:

Matt 7:22-23 ... *"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform any miracles?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I **never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"*

Jesus taught us the priority in prayer ... "Our Father who art in heaven, **hallowed be Thy name** ..." This comes first and is more important than anything else. Christianity never begins with man and his needs and then tries to fit God in to man's program – it begins with God - and only then it looks around to the things of man. If we gaze at God and only glance at our needs, we'll find He's dealt with our needs before we even know it.

Conclusion:

I believe what the Lord is saying to His church is, **if you major on knowing God** – cultivate a sense of His presence in your daily life and **practice the presence of God** – and daily seek to know Him and to ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in the Scriptures and bring you a revelation of God, you will go a long way to serving your generation for God, and you'll do it in His power. His glory will be revealed and it will bring a miraculous change to the people of this nation.

Jn 17:3 ... *"This is eternal life, that they may **know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

2 Chr 7:14 ... *"if My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and **seek My face and turn from their wicked ways**, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

Psalms 85:9 ... *"Surely His salvation is near to those who **fear Him**, that **glory** may dwell in our land."*

That's our heavenly Father's heart cry. Will we listen and respond? Will we experience His glory presence and make a difference in this land for Him?

Prayer:

Eph 3:14-21 ... *"I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, **according to the riches of His glory**, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and **to know** the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be **filled up to all the fullness of God**. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."*

1. Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art;
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.
2. Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.
3. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

4. High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heav'n's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whate'er befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.