

SESSION 1 - FRIDAY EVENING

I. OVERVIEW: YOU WERE MADE TO EXPERIENCE THE LORD

- A. God has always desired face to face communion with His people. In all periods of human history God pursued us: In the Garden; with the patriarchs; during the time of the tabernacle / temple period; the Church age; Millennium era and beyond.
- B. In the Garden, Adam walked with God and enjoyed face to face communion with Him (Gen. 3:8). Enoch and Abraham enjoyed a close relationship with God even after the fall (Gen. 5:24; Gen. 12:1-4; Gen. 15:6; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8; James 2:23).

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden... (Gen. 3:8)

And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. (James 2:23; Gen 15:6)

- C. Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah and others "drew near", "spoke with God" and experienced Him in a personal way (Ex. 20:21; 33:11, 17-23; 34:5-6; 1 Sam. 3:10-11; 15:10; Ps. 27:4-5; 110:1-2; 119:96; Mt. 22:43-44; 1 Kings 17:8-9; 18:1; 19:9-18).

So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. (Ex. 33:11)

1. Their relationships were not meant to be exclusive but an example to inspire us.
2. Moses longed for the day that all of God's people would prophesy (hear from God and speak).

Then Moses said to him, "Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" (Nu. 11:29)

- D. In the new covenant, we have a much better situation as the Spirit of God lives inside each of us! (John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 6:19). He is our counsellor, teacher, and revealer of the deep mysteries of God the Father. (John 14:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 2:26-28; 1 Cor. 2:8-10).

...[T]he Spirit of truth... dwells with you and will be in you. (John 14:17)

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things... (John 14:26)

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. (1 Cor. 2:10)

- E. We become transformed by inquiring, gazing, meditating and fellowshiping with God inside us. (Psalm 27:4; John 14:16-17, 26; 16:13-15; James 4:8; Col 1:26-27; 2 Cor. 3:18)

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding ...the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. 3:18)

- F. In the New Jerusalem we will be in intimate relationship with God, face to face in our resurrected, glorified bodies! (Dan. 12:2-3; John 5:28-29; 15:49, 53; 1 John 3:1-2; 1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 21:2-3)

2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... and I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. (Rev. 21:2-3)

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. (1 Cor. 13:12)

II. THE NATURE OF MAN

- A. Men and women have a **spirit** with a **soul** (mind, will, emotions) and a **body**.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:23)

- B. The Old Testament temple is a model of a human being: *Holy of Holies and Holy Place* (spirit); *Outer Court* (soul) and *the tent* (physical body) (1 Cor. 6:19; Ex. 35-40). Jesus compared His whole being (body, soul, spirit) to the temple in Jerusalem (John 2:19).
- C. Our salvation is occurring in us in three distinct parts of us (spirit, soul, body) at three distinct moments. One third of our salvation is complete (the salvation of our spirit) the other two parts are in process of salvation (receiving grace and growing in righteousness).
1. **Justification**: our *legal position*—past tense, focused on my **spirit** (I have been saved)
 2. **Sanctification**: our *living condition*—present tense, focused on my **soul** (I am being saved)
 3. **Glorification**: our *eternal exaltation*—future tense, focused on my **body** (I will be saved)
- D. Unfortunately most people spend the majority of their time building up their body or soul while neglecting their truest part, their spirit (Eph. 2:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:16-17; 1 Tim. 4:8; Jude 20-21).

For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness [life from the Spirit] is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. (1 Tim. 4:8)

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, (Jude 20)

- E. When you encounter God in your spirit, it then touches your mind and onto your physical body. In other words, it increases the quality of your “living condition”.

III. INJUSTICES IN THE CHURCH TODAY

- A. Lack of understanding our identity: Many believers are more comfortable working for God than receiving from God. When we know we are a bride and a son, we can enjoy God and enter rest.
- B. Lack of intimacy: Many believers are more familiar with facts about God than personally experiencing God. We want to experience and understand in our minds, will, emotions the things on God's heart.
- C. Lack of quality (strength, maturity, enjoyment): unaddressed wounds and issues allow for believers to be "stuck" in their journey for years while the power of the risen Jesus lives inside them and inside the Church.

IV. WHY WE WANT PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH THE LORD

- A. To grow in identity before God as a son (Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:14; Rev. 3:21) and a bride (Rev. 21:2; 22:17; Mat. 25:1-13; Eph. 5:25-32). Many Christians are more comfortable working for God versus relating to God as a son and bride; Many are busy trying to please God versus enjoying how God is pleased with them. When we see how God loves us, it changes everything (John 17:26; John 15:9).

And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You [the Father] loved Me [Jesus] may be in them, and I in them. (John 17:26)

As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (John 15:9)

- B. To grow in intimacy: To experience God by encountering Him versus knowing facts about Him. There's a difference! (Eph. 3:17-19).

17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know [experience] the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph. 3:17-19)

- C. To learn how to receive love from God. When you learn to receive, you have something of God to give away. The story of Mary and Martha reveals the better part to what we devote our time is sitting at Jesus' feet. Lovers make better workers: less burn-out and better fruit (Luke 10:38-42).

But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:42)

- D. To get emotional and physical healing from God. Jesus is the God of Isaiah 61. When we meet Jesus, healing happens. Healing equips us on our journey with the Lord and strengthens us in our ministry assignment (Isa. 61:1-3; Luke 6:17-19; Psalm 103:1-2).

He [Jesus] came down with them [twelve disciples]... and the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed them all. (Luke 6:17-19)

E. To cultivate the prophetic spirit (1 Cor. 14:1-3, 31). This is crucial to grow in as the time of the Lord's return approaches. As we respond to what we hear we grow in maturity and the body matures (Eph. 4:11-16). The prophet Joel mentions that there would be a great outpouring of the Spirit before the coming of the day of the Lord. The downpayment of the promise in Joel 2 was in Acts, but Joel 2 has not been fully realized yet (Joel 2:28-32). Cultivating the prophetic spirit *now* is a way to prepare for a *later* time when God gives us more!

For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. (1 Cor. 14:31)

F. Grow in discernment and skills of interpretation. We will learn the inner witness of the Holy Spirit and how to take subjective prophetic experiences to God in order weigh and understand them. We will learn how to interpret pictures, impressions and experience with God that will strengthen us in our lives..

V. GROUP ACTIVATION