

---

# DEEPER WATERS

## Going Deeper in Our Hunger for God's Presence

---

Why do we at Riverlife make such a big deal about the presence of God? Surely every church, every believer has and moves with the presence of God, after all, that's what identifies us right? We have God's Spirit living within us.

### More of Him

As we go deeper into following Jesus, a vital pursuit is a hunger for the presence of God.

Understanding what the presence of God involves, includes at least three vital components.

### A Greater Realization of God's Presence

A hunger for God's presence is demonstrated by a desire to want to perceive His presence more. We want to be more conscious of Him. We want a greater awareness of Him in our midst. God promises that as we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us (James 4:8), and Scripture indicates that we will experience His presence in ever-increasing measures as we hunger for Him.

### We Long to Be Filled to Full Measure with His Holy Spirit

We want to rid ourselves of familiarity and complacency. We are filled with the Holy Spirit when God occupies every part of our lives. He is allowed to do within us all that He came to do. He guides and controls us. His power is exerted through us and reveals itself in the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness etc (Galatians 5:22-23).

### God's Manifest Presence

A clear, even visible increase of God's working in a specific situation, event, or life. God's manifest presence will always honour the person of Jesus Christ and produce a greater hatred of sin and a greater love for righteousness. It will never contradict any previously revealed truth found in the Bible. It will never contradict any previously revealed truth found in the Bible and will never turn inwards.

As we go into deeper waters, what would it look like for each of us here at Riverlife to go a little deeper in our hunger for God's presence?

Imagine for a moment if we were to go deeper in our relationship with God, knowing Him and embracing the reality of His empowering presence:

- + Where it's commonplace as followers of Jesus to read the bible and pray daily.
- + And our family is constantly desiring and surprised by God's movement amongst us.
- + Where we encounter Him in all aspects of life.
- + And our faith is at a level that supernatural signs and wonders are normal occurrences.

God's presence is essential for Kingdom outcomes (Luke 5:1-11). People, by their sheer willpower, are capable of harnessing great human resources to carry out great activities. We can drum up impressive programs, undertake important initiatives, and maintain positive momentums. But what we need is the presence of Jesus. We need hearts that are not even wanting to succeed unless God is at the root of our initiatives.

Something God-honouring takes place whenever we hunger for Him. When we turn from the sins that so easily entangle us and run with perseverance the race marked out for us (Hebrews 12:1-2).

## **Keeping Our Hearts Aligned with Heaven**

We know the human heart tends to drift into entropy, selfishness, or worldliness. So, we've got to position ourselves in ways and places that help align our hearts with heaven and with one another.

## **Worship and Prayer**

God moves in power where He is wanted, desired (Mark 6:1-6).

Jump in:

- + United Prayer gatherings every week several times a week. Every Monday 8-9am; Wednesday 7-8am and 12noon-1:30pm and Friday's 7-8am We want our church to be a "House of Prayer".

## **Build the Secret Place with God**

We want our people to spend time alone in God's presence to hear God's voice and experience His presence.

- + The chapel is open Sunday through Friday 7am-8pm
- + Tuesday, we host Worship Room in the Chapel from 6-8pm.

## **Kingdom Values and Lifestyle**

In order to keep our hearts aligned with heaven we need to be holy as God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). If you want to make the "Holy" Spirit at home in your life then keep the records short with God – confess our sin, put off unholy ways and walk with clean hands and pure hearts (Psalm 24:4).

## **Greater Exercise of Faith and Obedience**

God is an ever-present reality to be encountered. The presence of Jesus by His Spirit lives within us. Let us not take it for granted but give Him our full attention and as God leads our church, be willing to obey and demonstrate our faith in Him by stepping out and going deeper, well beyond our human resources and trust in His provision. We desire to let God be "God" in our fellowship and as leaders we will lead the way.

## **Grow Your Hunger**

God is looking for people through whom He can show Himself strong (2 Chronicles 16:9). How does He show Himself strong? By working through the people who are willing to be yielded so that He can show Himself strong through them.

There is nothing more exciting and empowering than living each day in the very presence of God as we have described today. That's a different life than one run on auto pilot. That's a life of adventure and excitement as we:

- + Have a consuming desire for a greater realisation of God's presence.
- + A longing to be filled (led and empowered) by the Holy Spirit and,
- + Seek a special anointing of God for a special task at a specific time

If you desire this incredible experience, then commit yourself today to that end in prayer and then find someone who will hold you accountable to your pledge.

## Prayer

*Disturb me, Lord, when I am too well pleased with myself, when my dreams have come true because I sailed too close to the shore. Disturb me, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas, where storms will show your mastery; where losing sight of land, I shall find the stars. Amen*

## Discussion Questions

1. Are you comfortable with sharing about the notion of hungering for God's presence? Why or why not?
2. As we go into deeper waters, what would it look like for each of us here at Riverlife to go a little deeper in our hunger for God's presence? Partner up and share what it looks like for you.
3. In the various areas involved in keeping our hearts aligned with heaven, what area will you intentionally go a little deeper? What does that look like? Who will help encourage you and hold you accountable?
4. Pray the prayer at the end of the notes for each other.