

# UNMERITED FAVOR

*Your supernatural advantage for a successful life*

## JOSEPH PRINCE

# *Practicing the Presence of Jesus*

**L**et's look at some practical keys on how you can begin to EXPERIENCE God's manifested presence in your life by PRACTICING HIS PRESENCE. It is one thing to know theoretically that God is with you, but to experience His presence, you have to increase your consciousness of His presence by practicing His presence!

This is not something difficult. In fact, it should be rather effortless. Do you know that even as you have been or are reading about Jesus right now, you have been and you are practicing the presence of Jesus? As you are reading about Jesus and discovering what He says in His Word about you, you have just become effortlessly more conscious of His presence with you right now.

And as you think of Jesus more and more, you will begin to experience a peace you never had, a strength like never before and a joy that you cannot describe with words. Wisdom starts to flow and your decision-making ability is sharpened. Just by being exposed to the presence of the Son of the living God, the breakthrough that you have been struggling for supernaturally occurs.

My friend, trees don't strain and struggle to produce fruit. Instead, with adequate exposure to sunlight and water, fruits are produced effortlessly. Similarly, with adequate exposure to SON-light and the living water of God's Word, good fruits are produced in your life effortlessly. Your victory is a fruit. Your success is a fruit. Your health is a fruit. Family harmony is a fruit. Career success is a fruit. All these good fruits are birthed just by you being in the presence of the Lord! Stress, depression, and anger fade away and no longer dominate your thoughts. Worry has no foothold in your mind. The consciousness of Jesus' perfect love for you removes every vestige of trepidation and fear. You feel and start behaving like the new creation in Christ that you are, regardless of your current circumstances. Hallelujah!

**God's Presence Is With You To Make You A Success,  
Not Find Fault With You**

Something very unique and precious happens when you see that the Lord is with you. Trust the Lord to open your eyes to see Him in your situation, and the more you see Him, the more He manifests Himself. If you are in the midst of committing to an important business agreement, I assure you that if you can see the Lord there with you, His wisdom will flow through you, and He will give you supernatural insight to locate any loopholes, details or exit clauses that are missing from that contract that you are about to sign.

Once you involve Jesus and acknowledge His presence, you will sense Him intervening in any decision you are about to make, through the absence or presence of His peace. Everything can appear to be in order on the surface, but somehow, if you sense a discomfort rising up in you every time you think about your decision, my advice to you would be to not rush into it. Once you have involved the Lord, the lack of peace that you feel is often His leading to protect you. You can even be in the midst of an argument with your spouse, but the moment you become conscious of the Lord's presence, your words will change. Somehow, there will be a supernatural restraint that you know is not from yourself. That is also the Lord!

*God's presence is with you to direct you, to guide you, to lead you into becoming more like Christ, and to make you a success in every endeavor you undertake.*

Before we continue, I just have to say this: It is important for you to eradicate the notion that the Lord is present to FIND FAULT with you. You may have been raised in an environment where your parents were constantly picking on your faults and pointing out your mistakes, but don't project this characteristic onto the Lord. God knows every idiosyncrasy about you, yet He loves you perfectly because He sees you through the lens of the cross, where His Son has removed every failing from your life!

So even your current argument with your spouse is washed by the blood of Jesus. The Lord's presence is with you NOT to judge you or to smack you on the head with a giant bat the moment you fail. No, my friend, His presence is with you to direct you, guide you, lead you into becoming more like Christ, and make you a success in every endeavor you undertake.

No matter where you are, the Lord is with you. Even in the midst of your fears, while you are alone in your room, He is there with you. The moment you begin to be aware of His presence and cultivate His presence, all your fears, anxieties and worries will melt like butter on a hot day, or as the psalmist David puts it, "The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord..." (Psalms 97:5)

You cannot psych yourself out of fear nor can you psych yourself out of worry. You can't just tell yourself, "Come on, stop worrying. There is nothing to worry about." It just doesn't work. The debt will still be staring you in your face and your problems will still be as insurmountable as ever no matter how hard you try to psych yourself up. That is what the world is trying to do, but it does not work. It takes the presence of the Lord to keep you free from worry.

Jesus is not asking you to psych yourself up and live in a state of denial. No way! He is saying to you, "In the midst of your affliction, I am your shield. I am your defender. I am your fortress. I am your refuge. I am your supply. I am your healing. I am your provider. I am your peace. I am your joy. I am your wisdom. I am your strength. I am the glory and the lifter of your head!" (Psalms 3:3) Amen! He is not asking you to pretend that the facts are not there. He wants you to realize that HE IS THERE WITH YOU!

When you know that He is with you and for you, and you put your problems in His mighty hands, you will begin to get a more accurate evaluation of just how "big" your problems are. When they were in your hands, the weight and burden of your problems may have crushed you. But when you involve Jesus, the once-monumental problems become microscopic in His hands!

## **God's Love For You Is Personal, Detailed And In-depth**

Do you know why there are many believers today who don't cast their cares upon the Lord? It is because they don't have a revelation that He cares for them. Look at what His Word says: "casting all your care upon Him, for HE CARES FOR YOU." (1 Peter 5:7) Unless you have absolute confidence that Jesus cares for you, you will not cast your cares upon Him. Just think, would you call upon the help of a relative or friend in your time of need if you were not confident that the person would respond to your call? Jesus

cares for you. When you call upon Him, know that you have His fullest attention with all of heaven's resources backing you up!

Maybe you are thinking right now, "Well, I am sure that Jesus has more important things to do than to bother with my problem." Hang on. By saying that, you have just shown that you don't really believe that Jesus cares for you. Now, let's see what the Bible says: "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows." Luke 12:7)

I love and care for my sweet daughter, Jessica. But as much as I adore her and care for her well-being, I have never, not once, counted the number of strands of hair on her head! She does not know how great a blessing she has been to me. I love to kiss her, smell her hair and hug her tightly. Yet, in all my great love for her, I have never taken the time to count the number of strands of hair on her head in all these years!

But do you know that your heavenly Father numbers the very hairs on your head? I really hope that you are beginning to catch the heart of Jesus and not generalize His love for you. His love for you is all-encompassing. If He cares enough to keep track of the hairs on your head, is there anything too small for Him that you cannot talk to Him about?

*God is vitally and intensely involved in the day-to-day minute details of your life.*

God's love for you is infinitely detailed. Jesus said that not one sparrow falls to the ground apart from the Father's will. Are you not of more value than a sparrow? Is God a God who winds the clock and leaves it alone to tick until Jesus comes back? Is He only involved with major events in the world? Is He only involved in significant events in our lives like our salvation, or is He vitally and intensely involved in the day-to-day minute details of your life? What do you think? The Bible says that He calls His own sheep by name. (John 10:3, 14) My friend, His love for you is personal, detailed and in-depth!

## **See Jesus In The Midst Of Everything That You Do**

When you study your Bible knowing that the Lord is with you, you will be amazed at how God's Word comes alive. That is how I read the

**Word. I don't study just to prepare for messages to preach on Sundays. I come to the Word to drink of the living waters from Jesus. I am conscious that Jesus is by my side, teaching me, speaking to my heart, and I can tell you that we have the best conversations during these times and I always come away from such times feeling refreshed and energized.**

**Reading His Word has become a great personal time of intimacy between Jesus and me. I get completely lost and absorbed in His presence until I lose track of time. I can't tell you the number of times when I had looked up at my clock after digging into His Word and realized that it was already five in the morning! You know what it's like when you are enjoying a steaming cup of latte in a cafe with friends that you love, and you are having so much fun, laughing and sharing, that time just seems to disappear? Well, you can enjoy Jesus' presence in the same way!**

**Once you are conscious that Jesus is with you, reading the Bible no longer feels like a chore or duty. You won't catch yourself watching the clock going tick...tick...tick...tick...tick...and feeling as though an eternity has passed even though only five minutes has lapsed! That is what a chore feels like-as if time is standing still and you can't wait to get it over with. Bible study divorced from His presence is a dead work. But when it is like catching up with your best friend, there never seems to be enough time!**

**So see the Lord in the midst of everything that you do and learn to bring Him into the picture. He makes everything beautiful in your life. When you look at your past, the scars of yesterday may still be throbbing in your memories. Perhaps you were sexually abused as a child or you were emotionally hurt by someone you trusted. As you look back now, you may still feel angry, frustrated and disappointed all at the same time, and the hurt still pierces your heart. But in the midst of your pain, I want to challenge you to start involving Jesus. See the Lord holding you, gently healing your wounds. Jesus is right there restoring you, putting courage into your heart and taking away all the sense of shame and guilt.**

**Beloved, He wants you to know that your past will not determine the future that He has for you. Once you involve the Lord and put Him into**

your bitter waters, He will turn the bitterness into sweetness. That is what the Lord did for the children of Israel. When they came to a place called Marah, they could not drink its waters because they were bitter. Moses cried out to the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree, which Moses cast into the waters. When he did that, the Bible says that "the waters were made sweet." (Exodus 15:25)

*Your past will not determine the future that God has for you.*

Why did the foul-tasting, undrinkable waters become refreshing and sweet? The answer lies in the tree that was cast in. The tree is a picture of the cross on which our Lord Jesus hung, bearing every broken heart and every sting of betrayal. When you bring Jesus into your situation, He can cause every bitter experience to become sweet! Talk to Him and allow His presence to restore you today!

## **When You Practice Jesus' Presence, His Glory, Beauty And Power Will Rub Off On You**

David is a wonderful example of someone who talked to the Lord and practiced His presence all the time. Even as a young teenager taking care of his father's sheep in the fields, he would be singing psalms and hymns to the Lord and playing his harp.

In 1 Samuel 16, the Bible records that King Saul was very unsettled, and his servants told him that he was being troubled by a distressing spirit. They then advised him to bring David before him to play the harp for him, saying that evil spirits departed when David played the harp. One of the servants gave a glowing description of David as someone " ...who is skillful in playing, a mighty man of valor, a man of war, prudent in speech, and a handsome person; and the Lord is with him." (1 Samuel 16:18) Do you know why David could cause Saul to become refreshed just by playing his harp? Do you know why David could have such accolades (a light touch on the shoulder with the flat side of the sword, a knight, sir) heaped upon him? I believe that the key is in the last part of the verse: "the Lord is with him."

A few years after Wendy and I got married, an incident happened that I will never forget. I was on my way home one day and I had stepped into a cramped elevator. A group of ladies squeezed into the

same elevator as it stopped on another floor and boy, their perfumes were so thick and overpowering they must have been wearing Chanel No. 1,000!

*You cannot be in the presence of the Lord without His glory,  
His majesty, His beauty, His power, His love and  
His peace rubbing off on you.*

Anyway, almost dizzy from near-suffocation, I got home and kissed Wendy with my usual "Hello darling, I'm back." Then, she looked at me and said, "That's a female fragrance. I know that fragrance." I told her, "Listen, darling, listen ...honestly, just now ..." And that's why it's so important to have trust in your marriage!

I am sure that you have experienced something similar before. Have you ever walked through a restaurant or some other place that is filled with smoke? You may not smoke, but your hair and clothes become infused with the smell of smoke by the time you get through the place. In the same way, you cannot be in the presence of the Lord without His glory, His majesty, His beauty, His power, His love and His peace rubbing off on you. You begin to "smell" like Jesus, be powerful like Him and be filled with peace like Him! No wonder Acts 4:13 records this about Peter and John: "Now when they [the rulers and elders of Israel] saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS."

## **Practice The Presence Of Jesus In Your Career**

Wherever you are, whatever it is that you do, with the Lord's presence and His unmerited favor covering you, there is no way you will not be a success. When I started working in my early twenties, I kept on practicing the presence of Jesus and in a short time, I became the top salesperson in my company. I not only closed the biggest deals for my company, but I also secured the greatest frequency of sales transactions.

I started as one of the lowest-paid employees in the company, but the Lord consistently promoted me, and gave me different income streams from within the same company until I became one of the highest-paid

employees in that organization. Please understand that I am not sharing this with you to put a feather in my cap. I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that all the successes that I have experienced in my professional career are a result of Jesus' presence and unmerited favor in my life.

I shared with you about my professional career (before I entered full-time ministry) so that you will not walk away thinking that I have personally experienced good success from the Lord only because I am a pastor. No. Like I mentioned earlier, whatever vocation you are in, you can experience the presence of Jesus and His unmerited favor, and HE will make you a success!

Whether you are a chef, driver or consultant, it doesn't matter. God is on your side to bless and make you a success. Of course, you understand that I am referring to only morally upright professions. You cannot depend on God's unmerited favor if you are in an industry that requires you to compromise on your Christian morals. If you are involved in a morally corrupt industry or a job that expects you to lie, cheat or deceive, my advice to you is to get out! You do not have to depend on a job that puts you in a morally compromising position for your income. God loves you intimately and He has something so much better in store for you. Trust Him.

God is here to save you from destroying yourself. He wants to give you good success and He loves you too much to see you remain in a job that forces you to compromise. The Bible says, "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold." (Proverbs 22:1) God has a higher way and better plan for your life!

## **Practice Jesus' Presence By Thanking And Appreciating Him**

There are Christians who know in theory that Jesus is with them, but they do not actively practice His presence. For me personally, one of the best ways to practice the presence of the Lord is to thank Him all the time. You can give thanks to Him for everything. Just say, "Lord, I thank You for this beautiful sunset. I thank You for Your love and for

surrounding me with good things and good friends."

There is no limit to what you can thank Him for since every good and perfect gift that we enjoy today comes directly from Him. (James 1:17) Even if you have had a rough day at work and you are facing a seemingly impossible challenge, you can practice His presence. The moment you realize that your heart is heavy with worry and your mind is plagued by anxiety, share your challenge with Jesus and thank Him that this problem is not bigger than His hands. Begin to surrender it to Him and depend on Him for His strength, power and peace.

As you do that, you are already practicing the presence of the Lord. And as you honor His presence and behave like He is indeed with you, He sees it as faith in Him and intervenes on your behalf for your success in whatever situation you may be in.

It is sad when Christians behave like some husbands who bring their wives to a party, only to ignore them completely. Their wives could be right there with them physically, but these guys are so engaged with their own friends, talking about the stock market, economy or latest game on television, that their wives might as well not be with them.

Ladies, do you know men like that? Now, men who are reading this book, I know you are not like that, so don't get offended, all right? I know you cherish and love your wife. What I am trying to illustrate is that just because someone is with you physically, it does not mean that the person feels appreciated by you. Appreciation only occurs when you start acknowledging the presence of that person.

What I like to do is to look at Wendy across a room crowded with people, and when our eyes connect across the room, it is as if the rest of the people fade instantly into oblivion, and only Wendy remains. I want her to know that I appreciate her for coming along with me to that dinner event or meeting. I am not claiming that I am sensitive to Wendy all the time, but there are moments, and I do want to make it a point to make her feel special. She is special to me, but to actually appreciate her and to make her *feel* special is something else all together. Anyway, like all husbands, I am still growing in this aspect.

*What you appreciate appreciates in value in your eyes.*

Now, what does the word "appreciate" mean? It means "to increase in value." If you appreciate someone, the person increases in value in your eyes. My friend, the Lord is already with you, so start to practice His presence. Begin by thanking Him, appreciating Him and increasing His value in your eyes.

What did David mean when he said, "Oh, magnify the Lord with me ..."? (Psalms 34:3) Can we make God bigger? Of course not. The Lord is already very big. But the problem is that sometimes, our concept of Him is way too small. It reminds me of the story of a boy who was playing by the seaside. He was happily running back and forth between his sand castle and the sea, pouring pail after pail of water into the moat that he had dug around his sand castle. When it was time to leave, his little face clouded over and he tugged at his mother's sleeve worriedly. "Mummy," he said, "I think that the sea might be running out of water because I took so many pails of water from it."

Whether we are aware of it or not, that's how we see God sometimes. We are afraid to draw from Him, not knowing that His resources are endless. We become like that little boy who feared that he would dry up the ocean with his little plastic pail. So David said, "Hey brothers, come on, let us magnify the Lord. Let's make Him bigger in our hearts, in our minds, in our consciousness. Come on, magnify the Lord with me!" We cannot make the Lord bigger than He already is, but we sure can make Him bigger in our consciousness by being more and more aware of His presence with us.

## **Know Your Commander In Chief**

It is interesting when you listen to how some Christians talk. You may hear them talking about what the devil did to them, how they got really mad at the devil and how they spent a whole night rebuking the devil. Such Christians may also go around town telling people what the devil has been telling them, but you will never hear them talking about what THE LORD has been telling them. Guess what? They are tuned in to the wrong frequency!

Instead of magnifying Jesus and His presence and being conscious of Him, they are magnifying the devil and being more devil-conscious than

**Jesus-conscious. It's really sad! They are always talking about warfare and the devil. Do you know that the best warfare to engage in is to magnify the Lord Jesus in your life? The Bible declares, "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered..." (Psalms 68:1) Amen!**

**Recently, I had a conversation with a medical doctor about spiritual warfare. She said to me, "When there is a condition in your body, you must know what the correct medical name for it is so that you can pray against it accurately." Then, she told me somewhat smugly, "As someone who's been in the army, you should know this: The most important military strategy is to know your enemy."**

**I smiled at her and said, "Actually, I believe that the most important military strategy is not to know your enemy, but to know your commander in chief and his directives for you."**

**My friend, do you know your commander in chief, Jesus Christ? Do you know with full assurance that His presence and unmerited favor is with you? Start practicing the presence of Jesus in your life today, and see what a difference He will bring to your situation!**

**Prayer:**

**Lord Jesus, I invite You to heal me of every bitter experience that I have had. Thank You for bearing every hurt and every sting of betrayal at the Cross for me. I ask You that You do a deep work in me to remove the hurt and pain I feel whenever I recall these bitter experiences. Please replace every negative emotion in my heart with Your love, peace and joy. Lord Jesus, I want to experience a closer walk with You. I want to know You more intimately and be conscious of Your presence and unmerited favor in my life. Help me understand Your plans and purposes for me so that I may be wise in how I spend my days. I will be Jesus-conscious, not devil-conscious. Thank You in Jesus' Name. Amen.**