

**Training to Practice
God's Presence
Nehemiah 2:1-5**

"Can a laboring man
successfully attain this
continuous surrender to
God? Can a man working
at a machine pray for
people all day long, talk
with God all day long, and
at the same time do his
task efficiently?"

Can a merchant do
business, can an
accountant keep books,
ceaselessly surrendered to
God? Can a mother wash
dishes, care for the
babies, continuously
talking to God? Can a
politician keep in a state of
continuous contact with
God,

and not lose the following
of the crowds? Can little
children be taught to talk
and listen to God inwardly
all day long, and what is
the effect upon them?"

—Frank Laubauch, Letters
From A Modern Mystic

Nehemiah 2:1

During the month of Nisan
in the twentieth year of
King Artaxerxes, when
wine was set before him, I
took the wine and gave it
to the king. I had never
been sad in his presence,

Nehemiah 2:2-5

I was overwhelmed with fear 3 and replied to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should I not be sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

(v.4) Then the king asked me, "What is your request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven 5 and answered the king...

God longs for us to
practice His presence so
we can fulfill our divine
purpose.

Nehemiah 2:4-5

So I prayed to the God of heaven and answered the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, send me to Judah and to the city where my ancestors are buried, so that I may rebuild it."

Practicing God's presence means living every activity of the day with Jesus, by your side, sharing every experience with him.

**“Spiritual formation is
the process of being
formed in the image of
Christ for the sake of
others.”**

—Robert Mulholland Jr.

Psalm 16:7-11

I will praise the Lord who
counsels me—even at
night my conscience
instructs me. 8 I keep the
Lord in mind always.

Because He is at my right
hand, I will not be shaken.

9 Therefore my heart is
glad and my spirit rejoices;
my body also rests
securely.

10 For You will not
abandon me to Sheol; You
will not allow Your Faithful
One to see decay. 11 You
reveal the path of life to
me; in Your presence is
abundant joy; in Your right
hand are eternal
pleasures.

**WHY CAN WE PRACTICE
GOD'S PRESENCE?**

**The presence of God in
the Old Testament was
always an act of
visitation.**

**“Surely I am with you
always even to the end
of the age.”
—Jesus**

**The old covenant was an
age of visitation. But the
new covenant is an age
of habitation**

Ephesians 4:17-19

Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord: You should no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their thoughts. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them and because of the hardness of their hearts.

**PRACTICING GOD'S
PRESENCE TAKES
TRAINING**

**Learning to practicing
God's presence requires
training our spiritual
temperament to align
with our sacred story.**

TRAINING

**Christian Missionary
Frank Laubach:**

Although I have been a minister and a missionary for fifteen years, I have not lived the entire day of every day in minute-by-minute effort to follow the will of God. Two years ago a profound dissatisfaction led me to begin trying to line up my actions with

the will of God about every fifteen minutes or every half hour. Other people to whom I confessed this intention said it was impossible. I judge from what I have heard that few people are really trying even that. But this year I have started out trying to live all my waking moments in conscious listening to the inner voice, asking

**without ceasing, “What,
Father do you desire
said? What Father, do
you desire done this
minute? It is clear that
this is exactly what
Jesus was doing all day
every day. But it is not
what His followers have
been doing in very large
numbers.**

**—Frank Laubach, letters
by a Modern Mystic**

**Progress over perfection
(AA Saying)**

**We train to practice
God's presence by
constantly taking small
pauses throughout our
day—which builds the
habit of continually
turning our heart toward
God.**

Scripture consistently stresses the importance of doing so: abide in Jesus and let his words abide in you (John 15:4-7); set your mind on the things of the Spirit (Romans 8:5-6); walk by the Spirit (Gal 5:16,25); keep seeking the things above where Christ is (Col 3:1-2); rejoice always, pray without

**ceasing, in everything
give thanks (1Thess.
5:16-18); run with
endurance the race set
before you, fixing your
eyes on Jesus (Heb
12:1-2). The Spiritual life
is not a measurable
product but a dynamic
process.**

**Training your Spiritual
Temperament**

“Activists [who are abiding in Jesus] know how to find God by devoting themselves to him in self-sacrificing labors in which they are able to remain in his presence all day long... Although they are active laborers they are also hidden contemplatives because of their great purity of heart

**maintained in them by
obedience, fraternal
charity, self-sacrifice and
perfect abandonment to
God's will in all that they
do and suffer. They are
much closer to God than
they realize. They enjoy a
kind of "Masked
contemplation."
—Thomas Merton**

**Is my activism growing in
the fruit of the Spirit?**

**Training Your Spiritual
Temperament to Align
with Your Sacred Story**

**Any hour of any day may
be made perfect by
merely choosing. It is
perfect if one looks
toward God that entire
hour, waiting for His
leadership all through
the hour and trying hard
to do every tiny thing
exactly as God wishes it
done.**

**No emotions are
necessary. Just the
doing of God's will
perfectly makes the hour
a perfect one. And the
results of that one
perfect hour, I believe,
will echo down through
eternity.**

**—Frank Laubach, Letters
from a Modern Mystic**

“Clearly, clearly my job here is not to go to the town plaza and make proselytes, it is to live wrapped in God, trembling to His thoughts, burning with His passion. And, my love one, that is the best gift you can give to your own town.” —Frank Laubach, Letters From A Modern Mystic