

PRACTISING GOD'S PRESENCE THROUGH GIVING THANKS

One of the best ways to practice God's presence – to feel Him close as you go through your day – is to pray, especially prayers of thanks. King David knew this well. We see this throughout his Psalms. Psalm 100 is a good example of how close He felt to God. How he appreciated what God was to him and what God did for him.

*On your feet now—applaud God!
Bring a gift of laughter,
Sing yourselves into his presence.*

*Know this: GOD is God, and God, GOD.
He made us; we didn't make him.
We're his people, his well-tended sheep.*

*Enter with the password: 'Thank you!'
Make yourselves at home, talking praise.
Thank him. Worship him.*

*For GOD is sheer beauty,
All-generous in love,
Loyal always and ever.*

Psalm 100 (The Message)

In his book *The Rest of God* (), author Mark Buchanan talks about coming into the presence of God through thankfulness. He refers to C.S. Lewis's *Narnia Chronicles* and the wardrobe through which the children found themselves in a magical land:

"The best way I know to embody ... Godward orientation is thankfulness. Thankfulness is a secret passageway into a room you can't find any other way. It is the wardrobe into Narnia. It allows us to discover the rest of God—those dimensions of God's world, God's presence, God's character that are hidden, always, from the thankless."

Buchanan goes on to say that the first orientation to finding God's rest "...is to practice, mostly through thankfulness, the presence of God until you are utterly convinced of his goodness and sovereignty, until he's bigger, and you find your rest in him alone."

Through thanksgiving—in all circumstances—we can find peace, rest, joy. As the Bible says:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)