

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG104- The Danger Of Fulfillment Without His Presence

In recent podcasts I have been talking about the issue of the Presence of God that we must have in our lives, and our ability to enter into His Presence. One of the things that I find troubling is the ability to have fulfillment or blessings without His Presence. I think it is something that we need to be cautioned about, and we need to really make sure we are not falling into this trap. We must look and find, are we building without His Presence? Are we receiving blessings and fulfillments, but losing Him?

In First Corinthians 13, starting at verses 1-3, Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing." Now I believe Paul is pointing to this similar problem that I am speaking of, about the Presence of the Lord. You say, "I do not hear anything in these words about His Presence." Well, God is love. So he is saying, "If I do not have love in what I am doing, I do not have God in what I am doing. If I have all these gifts, I know all mysteries and knowledge, but I am not in the Presence of the Lord – I do not have God with me, I am not knowing God – then it is useless, it profits me nothing." This is just an illustration out of the New Testament Scriptures; because I think a lot of times in people's drive to say, "Oh, we need to have a time of restoration and a time of outpouring, a time of revival," many times we are looking for things rather than getting Him. I believe we need revival. But I believe what we need is God – we need the Presence of God back in our life, back in our families, back in our churches, back in everything that we are doing. We need to know as believers how to enter into His Presence, how to dwell in His Presence, and live there.

So the issue is Him. It is knowing Him, it is being with Him, dwelling with Him. It is not the things that come about; those things really are an aspect of Him. If there is blessing, He is blessing. If there is life, He is the life. If there is wisdom and truth, He is the wisdom and truth. If there is justice, He is justice. These things that we are used to identifying at times of breakthrough or of revival are really aspects of His Presence. And what you see in true revivals is the Presence of God, and that far outweighs and overshadows whatever gifts or miracles or signs are taking place in that time of revival. So there is a concern I have that we can seek for blessings, we can seek for fulfillments of prophecy, of words over our life or over other people, and not be really seeking Him. We can obtain the promises that He has given us, but not have Him and His Presence with us.

I want to read out of Exodus the thirty-second chapter, starting with verse 34. This is Moses in the wilderness, up on Mount Sinai with God. Of course, the people have just blown it by building a golden calf and worshipping that. And Moses has come back up and he is speaking with the Lord. Verses 34 through 35 say, "'But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin.' Then the Lord smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, 'Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, "To your descendants I will give it." I will send an

angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way.”

Dropping down to Exodus 33:13-18, the story goes on: “Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You.” – So here is Moses responding to the Lord saying, “Go ahead and lead the people into Canaan land, into all the promises that I have made to you, that I have made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but I am not going with you. I will send an angel with you, but I am not going.” Moses comes back and responds, and says, “Look, if I found favor in Your sight, then I want to behold You. I want to see Your glory.” – “Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You.” The point of Moses was to know God. It was to know the ways of God. He was seeking Him. He was seeking who He is. He was not really seeking Canaan land; he was not really seeking deliverance from Egypt; he was seeking God. And I think we have to ask ourselves, have we lost that focus of seeking for God in what we are believing for, in what we are working for, in what we are doing? So Moses wants to know Him. He goes on, “Consider too, that this nation is Your people.’ And He said, ‘My Presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.’ Then he said to Him, ‘If Your Presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?’ The Lord said to Moses, ‘I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name.’ Then Moses said, ‘I pray You, show me Your glory!’”

These are just dynamic verses to me. One reason is that here is Moses, asking to see the glory of God, when God is over here dealing with His anger with the people to the point of rejecting them. And He tells Moses, “Look, you can go up and you can possess the land.” This to me is a scary thing, because, in other words, God promised them the land; He did not promise them Him. He did not promise His Presence necessarily. And so, I think it is a question we have to ask ourselves: is it really possible in this day and age, is it possible in who we are and what we are doing, that we could be so seeking the fulfillment of God's Word in our lives and the things that He has promised us – the gifts, the visions, the revelations, whatever it is that He has told us He will do for us – that we miss His Presence? Are we after the blessings that He said He would bring into our lives? We have to be like Moses, we have to be seeking Him, and Him only. All of these other things, as the Scripture says, will be added. They are a by-product of His Presence. There are a by-product of God dwelling with us, and us dwelling with God. And I believe that we have to be extremely careful, in this day and age, that we not allow ourselves to be so seeking for blessings and fulfillments, and so driven to build ministries and churches and whatever we are seeking to build, that we end up having great success and yet no Presence of God. God was willing to do that with Israel: “Go ahead, possess the land of Canaan. But I am not going to be there. I am not going to be with you.” I cannot think of anything scarier in my life than to end up with a lot of fulfillment and a lot of blessing, and no God, no Presence of the Lord filling the things that He has promised to give.

We see another example of this in the book of Ezra, after they returned from the years of captivity. We know that during the captivity of Israel, the first captivity, the first Temple that was built by Solomon was destroyed. That Temple had been filled with the Presence of God to the point where they could not stand and minister. I mean, His Presence came, it descended out of heaven into that place, and they literally were slain under the weight of His glory and His appearing, and they were not able to minister whatsoever. So that first Temple was filled with the glory and the Presence of God, then He said, “I will

dwelt here.” Yet again, because of their sin, God rejected them, and He left. He left that temple until it was just a building, and He was no longer there. So they go into captivity for these seventy years, and then they come back under Ezra and Nehemiah and they begin to rebuild the Temple that had been destroyed. And they begin to rebuild Jerusalem, which had been destroyed.

In Ezra, the third chapter, starting at verse 10, it says, “Now when the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord according to the directions of King David of Israel.” Now notice, it is just an interesting use of words here, it says, “the priests stood.” In the first Temple, the priests were unable to stand and minister. Now we see in this dedication of the foundation or rebuilding of the Temple, the priests are able to stand. In verses 11-13, it goes on to say, “They sang, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, saying, ‘For He is good, for His lovingkindness is upon Israel forever.’ And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. Yet many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' households, the old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard far away.” Those who had seen the first Temple, those who were there, knew what it was to have the place filled with the Presence of God. And they realized here that they had built a foundation, yes; they had begun something that was restoring that which had been destroyed. But at the same time, it was devoid of God's Presence. It was devoid of that Shekinah glory that had existed during the first Temple. His Presence had left, and it had not yet returned.

I think it is a warning for us to recognize that we can build, even in the will of God; but if we are not seeking Him and His Presence above everything else, we end up with fulfillments without Him, without His Presence. I do not want that. I want to be like a Moses, seeking to know Him, seeking to see Him, behold His face. We want Him to fill all that transpires in this age, in this generation. Yes, we do need an outpouring of His Spirit. Yes, we do need restoration. Yes, we do need revival. But it cannot be blessings that we seek. It cannot be fulfillments that we seek. It must be Him that we are seeking. It must be His Presence that we long for. God give us the hunger that will trigger true restoration and true revival in this country. A revival of wanting You – wanting You back in our lives, wanting Your Presence back in our schools, wanting Your Presence back in our government, wanting Your Presence back in our churches, back in our nation in a way that it has been lost. We do not want to just try to rebuild something that looks like a fulfillment. We do not want to gain promises that You have given to us, as they had – promises of entering the land, and building in the land, and possessing the land. We do not want to gain fulfillments. We want You. We want to come into Your Presence and dwell with You and live with You.

You are what we are looking for, Father. You, Yeshua, are what we are longing for. We long to see You back in this earth, building Your Kingdom, as You taught us to pray, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on this earth as it is in heaven. And we do not mean just to build a kingdom; we mean for You and Your Presence to dwell with us in this land, on this earth, forever. We pray it with faith, as You taught us to pray. Amen.