

FACILITATOR'S COPY

THE PRESENCE

EPISODE 1

BREAKTHROUGH



**PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE
SPIRITUAL JOURNAL**

THE PRESENCE

EPISODE 1 BREAKTHROUGH

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE & SPIRITUAL JOURNAL

Written By:

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IMPORTANT:

This guide can be viewed on any reader device or can be printed out for a page total of 55 pages on 8.5X11 paper.

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This study is dedicated to many people but most importantly to the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior and to the Holy Spirit our Teacher and Comforter.

I believe we were truly led by the Holy Spirit as we ventured out on this kingdom movement. We have experienced breakthrough in our relationships and all involved have a true heart to see people experience what it feels like to live in “the Presence”.

I very much appreciate the contributions that Josh Fletcher, Jason and Joel Clark and their families gave to writing, dreaming, filming and editing this first episode.

Jason, as a host, told us a profound story that made it real and Sallie Mosely, as a host and friend, blessed me profoundly with her genuine heart and the way she hears from the Spirit.

My partner and friend Elijah Mosely is an amazing music producer that has a heart to hear the “Sound” like no one else I know.

We were blessed by amazing music by Songs of Water, Rob Jones and Jonathan & Melissa Helser.

My daughter, Tiffany Hayes, very much helped to inspire me in

this venture by sharing her heart and the excellent worship she brings.

Thanks to Great Britain's *David's Tent 2014* for allowing us to capture the wonderful worship.

Special thanks to our guests – Jonathan & Melissa Helser and Father Richard Frechette.

And most importantly thanks to my wife, Heidi, for continual love and partnership in our ministry ventures.

John White

Executive Producer

THE VISION

A stylized sunburst graphic consisting of several horizontal lines of varying lengths radiating from a central point below the title.

The Presence originated with a dream God gave me. My name is John White. My wife, Heidi, and I have lead a group called Friday Nite Worship on the Lake and have done a number of Christian outreach events. We felt instructed by the Lord to develop a show that would help believers to:

“Glorify the Father, Honor the Son and Live in the Presence.”

I am also the co-founder, with Elijah Mosely, of Freshwater Worship. Elijah owns Threshing Floor Audio and he is a Dove Award winning producer. He produced all of the amazing songs on this “*Breakthrough*” episode. You will find a number of artists and songs that will bring you into the Presence of God on our website, freshwaterworship.com.

Living in “*the Presence*” is attainable, or else the Lord wouldn’t have said to do it. We plan to interview and feature Christians throughout the world living a life daily in the conscious Presence of the Holy Spirit. It’s our passion to encourage Christians into a deeper walk with God and to mature their faith. It’s the intention of this project to empower the believer into a life consistent with the likeness of Jesus.

“He is the Potter and we are the clay” (Jeremiah 18:1). In these days, despite the distracting noise of the world we live in, we are invited to fully participate in the awareness of His Presence through the Holy Spirit working in and around us. Like clay, we are to surrender to His will and reflect His nature so that His will is revealed through us *“On earth as it is in heaven,” (Matthew 6:10).*

We pray this show and the Participant's Guide assists you in your desire to discover and connect with God's Presence. We hope these tools empower you into a maturing faith. In His Presence your creativity, imagination, and personality will be infused with His life. Together, you and God will develop a personal expression of your relationship. By faith embrace the journey, celebrate the breakthroughs and don't fear the mistakes. You will experience deeper encounters in His love, and along the way, ask yourself:

- How am I?
- Do I need something more?

That “something more” is His Presence.

Blessings,

John & Heidi White

Executive Producers of “The Presence”

PURPOSE OF A SMALL GROUP



Small groups are not a new idea. Christians have been meeting in small groups for a long time and for many different reasons. The main purpose of the group meetings outlined in this guide is to spark curiosity among Christians about the empowering Presence of God and encourage them to experience His Presence daily. The following elements are a part of every small group session. Your small group meeting can be completed within a two hour time period. The elements outlined below will take up as little as one hour of your time together.

SMALL GROUP ELEMENTS

1) Begin with prayer (2 minutes): Always start each group meeting with prayer. It doesn't have to be elaborate, but it is important to start off inviting God to meet with you. Make sure not to forget this important first element.

2) Door opening questions (5 minutes): These are fun questions designed to open the doors of our heart to each other and to the Holy Spirit. They are written with the intention of getting people to feel comfortable in the group.

3) God moments & journaling encounters (15 minutes): This is a time for testimony and open discussion about the way God is making Himself known among the members of the group. It is important that people feel safe and able to share with the group. One way that you as a group facilitator can help is to be the first one to share so that no one else has to go first. A good principle to remember is, "You cannot lead someone where you are unwilling to go yourself." Make sure that you are ready to share. At the same time, make sure that you leave plenty of space for others to share. Make sure to read *Suggestions for Life Changing Groups* on page 12.

4) Video & Notes (10 minutes): This is where the group will watch the appropriate video session and take any notes as they watch. The video segments are intentionally short so that you will have enough time for group discussion. Make sure that you have previewed the material before the group meeting and taken your own notes if needed. This will help you prepare for the next element.

5) Discussion questions (20 minutes): This is where the group discusses the ideas presented in the session video. These questions are printed in the participant's guides as well. Discussion questions are intentionally open-ended and designed to provoke thought and interaction among the participants. They are written with the goal of making the group think and engage one another. Don't be surprised if there are differences of opinion among the people in your group. This is to be expected and it is okay. Remember to encourage hard questions and don't be too quick to provide answers. Let people wrestle with the material when it is challenging. Again, make sure to read *Suggestions for Life Changing Groups* .

6) This week's exercise (5 minutes): This is when you as the group facilitator go over the suggested exercises for the days leading up to your next group meeting. Participants will read scripture and journal as they invite the Presence of God to come into their life in a deeper way. They will also write down any questions they might want to explore with the group, requests for or answers to prayer, and any moments during the week where God has shown up for them. Encourage your group members to do the exercises. When they do these exercises, they will have something to share at the beginning of the next group meeting. They will also find themselves intentionally listening to God and inviting Him into their lives, which is what we desire.

7) End with prayer (5 minutes or more): People need prayer. Always end your group session as you began it... with prayer. The ending prayer time can be more intercessory in nature. If someone would like prayer over a specific need, this is the time to take requests and to pray. Let the Lord lead you during this time and always invite His Presence.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LIFE CHANGING GROUP MEETINGS



DO'S

- Set a start time and an end time for the group meeting and keep to them even if people want to linger after the group meeting has ended. A start and end time help to create a safe place for the participants and help them to plan for things like childcare
- Consider offering a meal. Food somehow creates a good atmosphere for conversation and relationship building. It also encourages people to come each week.
- Consider offering a time of worship. If you are able or you know someone who is able, start your group session with worship. Worship sets the stage for God to show off. It makes our hearts soft to Him and to each other. It doesn't have to be elaborate.
- Be a good host. Think about your meeting space. Will it accommodate the number of people who are coming and what you are trying to accomplish? Is the space accessible for everyone who is coming? Is there enough seating? Do you have the right a/v equipment to show the video so that everyone

can see and hear it well? Does the equipment work? If you are not so good about the details associated with hosting a group, seek the help of someone who is good at those details. There are people who are gifted at this sort of thing.

- Include others in the planning of your group time. Delegate responsibilities to group participants. When people have a responsibility within the group, they feel more a part of what God is doing and they will be more receptive to the material. This also will help to take some of the load off your shoulders as the group facilitator.
- Maintain a positive attitude by engaging in thanksgiving and praise. Invite the Holy Spirit early and often.
- Encourage everyone to participate. Make sure that one person (including yourself) is not dominating the discussion. Make the group a safe place to share even if it means kindly and privately asking a group member to listen more in order to include others.
- Remember people's names. Nametags can help tremendously, both for you and for others in the group. Maintain a list of participants with contact information.

DONT'S

- Don't become the expert on the topic. Ask good questions rather than lecture the group. Be comfortable with open-ended questions and give time for people to answer. Silence is not necessarily bad. People often need time to process questions and ideas before responding.

- Don't be afraid to explore the honest questions of the group in addition to the one's we give you here. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- Don't forget to pray for your meeting and for each person in your group. Use your contact list as a prayer guide. Prayer is essential for a vibrant and life changing small group experience. As the group leader, it is your responsibility to lead by example.
- Don't forget to do your homework. You can't take someone where you are unwilling to go yourself. Make sure that you are doing each week's exercises.

PRAYER FOR THE GROUP AND THE FACILITATOR



Finally, we offer this prayer for you. Speak it out loud over yourself as you prepare to facilitate this group and come back to it as many times as necessary during the next four weeks.

Father, lead me with your love which never changes. May your love be manifest in all I think do and say as I facilitate this group?

Jesus, lead me with your Word, which is pure and true and powerful. May I lean heavily on your revelation as I facilitate this group.

Holy Spirit, lead me with your Presence which is always available. May I encounter you more and more as I seek you with all of my heart as I facilitate this group.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I give you this group meeting. Lead us with your love, your Word, and your Presence. Amen.

SMALL GROUP MATERIAL OVERVIEW



SESSION 1: THE PRESENCE

In your first session, you will watch *The Presence* video as a group. You will also learn about spiritual journaling and invite participants to share their encounters with *the Presence* when the group meets.

SESSION 2: PEACE IN THE STORM

This second session is all about living in the tension between believing in a good God while experiencing circumstances that are not so good. We will explore what it's like to stand wide-eyed in the storm and yet believe and proclaim the goodness of God. We will also invite His Presence into the broken circumstances of life and begin to see Him at work in us, through us, and sometimes despite us in a world that is less than perfect.

SESSION 3: HEARING THE HOLY SPIRIT

The third session is all about learning to hear God. We will learn the role that faith plays in hearing God's voice and the importance of listening prayer. We will also learn about some of the barriers to hearing God and how we can tear down those barriers by thinking differently.

SESSION 4: BECOMING MORE LIKE HIM

The fourth session is about the benefits of living in the Presence of God. It should go without saying that we are better with the Holy Spirit in our lives than without Him, but many Christians continue to live a life of independence rather than dependence. In this session, we are going to look at what it's like to have a healthy dependence upon the Holy Spirit and the fruit of living in His Presence.

SESSION 5: TRUE WORSHIP

The fifth and last session is all about launching believers into a lifestyle of worship empowered by the Presence of God. When we have learned not to be dismayed by life's storms, and we have learned to hear God when He speaks, and when we understand the role that the Holy Spirit plays in forming us into the likeness of Christ, we can be unleashed to worship God in spirit and in truth. During this session, we will learn how worship is an opportunity for Presence-filled praise and adoration.

INTRODUCTION



Congratulations!

You hold in your hands a tool that could change your life. The contents of this *Participant's Guide and Spiritual Journal* are special. The pages that follow are original. God gave them to us specifically for you as a member of this generation of believers. The prompts here are to help you on your journey with God. Will you join us right now in thanking God for what He is about to do?

This guide is designed to work in conjunction with *The Presence* videos to help you (with or without a small group) to encounter God in a deeper way and reflect upon your experiences with Him. As you watch the videos, pray about the ideas presented and then engage God weekly through spiritual journaling and the reading of His Word, we believe that you will:

- 1) Hear God's voice in a deeper and more meaningful way.
- 2) View life's circumstances and tensions as opportunities to encounter God & His peace.
- 3) Learn to hear the Holy Spirit with better discernment.

- 4) Grow and become like Him.
- 5) Be empowered as a more vibrant and true worshiper of God.

We are confident that *The Presence Study Series* will be a blessing to you and this guide will be something that you will keep and return to for encouragement and reflection in the days to come.

INSTRUCTIONS

This guide comes in two parts. The first is a viewing guide to each section of *The Presence*. As you watch the videos for each session, either on your own or with a small group, use this viewing guide to help you engage the ideas presented and prepare you for the second part of this experience, namely, the spiritual journal. Spiritual journaling is a very effective way to engage in conversation with God. To get you started, use the included resource, “A Brief Guide to Spiritual Journaling” on page 37 (page 48 facilitator’s copy).

FIRST & SECOND GRACE

The First Grace is the desire a person feels to know God: to say “yes” and give Him their life. If you have said, “yes” to Jesus and accepted Him as your savior, you did so through grace. *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”*—(Ephesians 2:8)

Salvation is a surrendered response by grace through faith to invite God into every area of our lives. Salvation is the discovery of

His perfect love, because “*God is Love...*” (1 John 4:16)

If you have not come to the realization of God's great love for you and your great need for God, you can know it right now by sincerely asking God to reveal His love for you and by asking His forgiveness for what you know you have done wrong. You can change your mind about being your “own savior” and invite Jesus into that role for your life. Invite His love and provision to become fully involved with you in every aspect and dedicate yourself to living in a great awareness of His Presence through the power of the Holy Spirit.

By just accepting Jesus, you have become part of His great family of all nations and ages. You now have a heavenly Father, a big Brother in Jesus and One called The Advocate, who is the Holy Spirit. You have brothers and sisters throughout the whole world. You will discover there are many people who have said “yes” to God and His good love.

You have not joined a church, though that is a good idea; you have become the church, the expression of God's family on earth. You'll now find that you naturally want to be with others who also love God. There are many places where Christians gather outside of Sunday morning such as bookstores, coffee shops, homes and the workplace. We encourage you to be intentional in connecting to a community of believers, wherever they gather.

You will soon find you have a new way of looking at and doing things. You will start to make decisions based on God's peace in your heart and what Jesus would do. God's love will begin to become your compass. All on your own you will want some of your habits to change. As you spend time with God, you will feel more

and more loved, secure and significant.

You will also find you want to know God more. You will develop a hunger for God that only increases the more you seek His Presence. You will discover that even though you have been filled with God's Presence there is always more and always a deeper knowing of Him. That leads you to experience the full wonder of His grace.

The Second Grace: There are two positions of the heart, or two thoughts to be stewarded by the maturing believer. They are the "In" and the "On" of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit *in* Jesus revealed His identity and His authority. The Holy Spirit *on* Him displayed His power. As in all things, Jesus is our example. The most obvious story of the Holy Spirit *in* and *on* Jesus is found at the Mount of Transfiguration. In Matthew 17:2b, we read how Jesus, with three disciples, went up a mountain and encountered God in a powerful way. This passage describes Jesus in this way: "*His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.*"

The Holy Spirit *in* you can also rest *on* you, too. His Presence *in* you will help you transition to be more like Him, experiencing His peace in a lifestyle of true worship. His Presence *on* you is His empowerment to transform events around you. Jesus not only modeled this but also promised it. Jesus said the Holy Spirit is your Advocate, otherwise known as your empowerment for breakthrough as well as the comforting Presence of God. Consider the following passages of Scriptures and notice the "in" and "on" of the

Holy Spirit. Jesus said:

“It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you” (John 16:7).

“And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city (Jerusalem) until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven” (Luke 24:49 NLT).

“... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The Presence of the Holy Spirit as your Advocate is yours for the asking. There are nine gifts the Holy Spirit wants to give us. They are described in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

POWER GIFTS

Word of Wisdom – When God gives a word of His wisdom, He is revealing something that has not yet come to pass.

Word of Knowledge – This is a gift of God’s knowledge. There would be no mistaking it for man’s knowledge.

Gift of Faith – This gift has to do with the functioning of God in you and through you with no human strength involved.

Gift of Healing – Jesus had perfect gifts of healing as the Holy Spirit led Him to where there was faith. By the same faith in the Holy Spirit, we have authority in specific healing prayers.

Gift of Miracles – This is a supernatural intervention by God in

the ordinary course of nature. It is God working through a person, animal (such as Baalam's donkey) or some other instrument that could not be done normally.

Gift of Prophecy – The gift of prophecy is not foretelling the future. It is not for guidance or rebuke. The gift of prophecy is primarily for edification or to build up or strengthen the church by a word of clarification or instruction from God.

GIFTS OF INSPIRATION

Discernment between Spirits – The discerning of spirits has no relationship to that which is natural. It has nothing to do with the realm of the mind. It is a discernment of spirits. It can operate by identifying the demonic or the kind of human spirit a person possesses.

Speaking in Different Kinds of Languages – This gift is not the learning of languages, but rather the infilling and overflow of the Holy Spirit expressed by the tongue to edify the individual and others. In 1 Corinthians 14:2 we see that “tongues” is a supernatural prayer language to communicate directly with God. “Various kinds of tongues” are a “sign” to stir the non-believer to “wonder” about and seek God. These can be supernatural or natural, known, languages.

Interpretation of Different Kinds of Languages – This is when one person gives a message in a language he does not know and another person interprets it. This reveals the Presence of God in that place. The interpretation is not a translation or an operation of the human mind, but rather a spiritual comprehension, understood by the mind and communicated.

SERVING GIFTS

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines” (1 Corinthians 12:10). If you ask, God will reveal His Presence through the Holy Spirit. He will empower and express Himself in and through you.

The Apostle Paul, in Romans 12:6-8, describes the serving gifts.

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

In each of these *Second Grace Gifts* there is a greater revelation of God's Presence. These gifts of the Holy Spirit contain His power for your *“Breakthrough.”* Just as Jesus was illuminated in greater measure on the Mt. of Transfiguration, just as the disciples discovered the power of God through the infilling of the Holy Spirit on the day known as Pentecost, you, too, are invited into a greater revelation or a second grace, known as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. You can invite the Holy Spirit to live in and rest upon you. You can say “yes” and “more” to each of these gifts.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE SECOND GRACE: BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Turn to the back **Journaling Section** of the guide on page 46 and record the date with your thoughts and feelings as you go through the following steps:

1) **Prepare your heart.** The Holy Spirit is holy. He is compared to a fire (see Matt. 3:11), which means He purifies sin and burns up that which is not Christ-like in our lives. Make sure you have confessed all known sin and made your heart ready for His infilling.

2) **Ask Jesus to baptize you in the Spirit.** You do not need to jump through hoops to get God's attention. He is eager to answer your request. Jesus is the one who baptizes us in the Spirit, so ask Him—and expect Him to answer.

3) **Receive the infilling.** Begin to thank Him for this miracle. The Holy Spirit's power is filling your life. If you feel your mind is clouded with doubts, just praise the Lord. Focus your mind on Him and not on yourself.

4) **Release your prayer language.** The moment you are filled with the Spirit, you will receive the ability to speak or sing in your heavenly prayer language. You may feel the words bubbling up inside of you. You may begin to hear the words in your mind. Open your mouth and began to speak, trusting the Lord to give you this new, supernatural language. Some people ask me, "Do I have to speak in tongues?" Certainly God will not force you to do it, and it has nothing to do with salvation. He offers this gift to anyone who wants it. It could be considered the least of the gifts—but it serves

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as a doorway to the supernatural realm and helps usher you into the deeper things of God.

5) **Step out in boldness.** After you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, one of the first things you will notice is a new boldness. *

If you went through these prompts for the first time, you have launched on a unique journey, a one of a kind walk with your new best friend the Holy Spirit. Bill Johnson of Bethel Church in California and well-known Christian author reminds us, “*God cuts the suit to the man, not the man to the suit.*” Living in His Presence is to become who you truly are suited to be. Watch for these gifts to start working in your daily life.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

(Facilitator's Guide Only)

Throughout this facilitator's guide, you will find recommended worship resources that you can use to worship with during the beginning of the group or encourage each individual to worship at home. This facilitator guide will also highlight opportunities to lead the group deeper into God's Presence. You are the leader; the Holy Spirit leads you and He rests upon you. You can create a safe place to empower the participants to discover more of God's Presence.

For *First Grace* we recommend:

WORSHIP SONGS

Album - *Bethel: We Will Not Be Shaken*

Songs - *Sea of Crimson & Home*

For *The Second Work of Grace* we recommend:

Sallie Mosley's music video - *You Are I Am* at

www.Freshwaterworship.com

WORSHIP SONGS

Album - *The Helser's- Live At Home*

Songs - *He Has Conquered Death, I Will Follow Him*
and *Mount Zion*

VIEWING GUIDE SECTION

SESSION 1



EPISODE ONE "BREAKTHROUGH"

- **Begin with prayer** (5 minutes)

- **Door opening question** (10 minutes)

For this first meeting, it is going to be important to introduce yourself to the group and let each group member introduce himself or herself. Use this exercise to break the ice. Give each participant their participant guides and have them turn to page 19. There they will find this:

.....**just isn't the same without**.....!

Have the group members take a few moments to fill in the blanks in order to make the sentence true for them. After they have had time to think, ask each member to do three things:

- 1) Introduce themselves to the group.
- 2) Tell what brought them to the group, and
- 3) Read their completed sentences.

As the facilitator, you lead by example and go first. As people share, make sure to be affirming and attentive. Make notes so you know how to pray for your group.

No matter what sentences are shared, after everyone has completed their sentences, let them know that this video and study guide was created with the hope that after people finish they will be able to fill in the blanks like this:

LIFE just isn't the same without HIS PRESENCE!

•**Video:** *The Presence* (30 minutes)

In this first meeting, most of your time together will be spent watching *The Presence* and our *Guide to Spiritual Journaling*. Remember to pray and invite the Holy Spirit to speak before you start the film.

Note: Make sure that everyone has a *Participant's Guide*. Every time we instruct the group to view a video, there is a corresponding page in the guide where participants can take notes. Your discussion questions will be printed there, as well. The *Participant's Guide* is an important tool for group discussion as well as the weekly exercises that will enrich your time together.

•**Notes:**

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•**Discussion questions: (10 minutes)**

- 1) This film has many interesting moments. Name one moment that was particularly interesting for you and explain why.
- 2) Many people have strong feelings while watching a film like this. What thoughts or feelings did you have while watching this film?

•**Video: *What is Spiritual Journaling?* (5 minutes)**

After you have completed the discussion questions, it's time to watch our *Brief Guide to Spiritual Journaling*. Have your group turn to page 37 before you start the video.

•**This week's encounter**

Read this with the group from their Participants' Guides to help them prepare for this week's encounter with His Presence

This week we are going to read and meditate on two passages of scripture in Matthew where Jesus taught his disciples using a boat and some wind. Simply follow the brief guide to spiritual journaling we have provided and make the scriptures below your focus. Each day of this week invite the Presence of the Lord to come during the reading of His Word. Come to your small group session ready to discuss what you have discovered.

•**End with prayer: (5 minutes)**

As a facilitator, each time you gather you have the amazing privilege of partnering with the Holy Spirit to create an atmosphere for every participant to encounter God's Presence.

We have suggested worship resources that we believe will be helpful to you. You may want to use these resources to worship together before diving into the material each week, or you may want to have the songs play in the background as you fellowship before and after each meeting. However you feel led, feel free to encourage each participant to spend time each week in worship. Encourage them in their weekly quiet time or while journaling to spend time in focused affection on the goodness of God. Worship is one of the most powerful and intentional ways to discover more of God's Presence.

Recommended worship songs to take you into *the Presence*.
All the songs can be found at www.freshwaterworship.com

Bethel Music "We Will Not Be Shaken" CD/DVD

- 1) *Jesus We Love You*
- 2) *Ever Be*
- 3) *Who Can Compare To You?*
- 4) *You Are My One Thing.*
- 5) *Home*

SESSION 2



PEACE IN THE STORM

- **Begin with prayer (5 minutes)**

- **Door opening question (10 minutes)**

Here is your Door opening discussion question for this week. Use this question to get people talking and connecting.

- 1) What was the scariest weather event you have ever experienced?
- 2) How did you weather the weather?

- **God moments**

Explain to the group what a God moment is and that each week they will have the opportunity to talk about how the Presence of God has shown up in the past week. Since you are the facilitator, you get to share first. Then invite others to share.

A God moment is an instance during your week when the Presence of God showed up and you noticed Him. Share about

a time this week when you heard God speaking or moving or when you felt His Presence. It can be something you wrote about in your journal or a recent encounter with God that was important to you.

•Video & Notes

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•Discussion questions (20 minutes)

1) Please read Isaiah 9:6 together. Did you know that this passage was used to announce the birth of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit through Him? (Luke 2:11, Matthew 28:18).

2) Please review your journal scriptures from last week and ask yourself: Who can maintain peace in the storm? What is His name?

3) Specific questions taken from the film quotes

a. What storm is currently in your life?

b. What part is beautiful and what part is difficult?

c. Are you discovering the Prince of Peace, who He is and who you are in this storm? Or do you only feel like you are dying? Are you as Father Rick describes, *“riveted to grief and not able to see the good in your life?”*

d. What steps must you take so that you can keep moving

and not get stuck in the storm? What is needed so that you feel what is described as the *“Peace beyond what the world can give?”* (John 14:27)

e. What about the other titles listed in Isaiah 9:6: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, and The Everlasting Father? Are you experiencing the Presence of the person of these titles in your storm?

4.) Who can pray with you to have the reassurance in the Prince of Peace who calmed the storm in Matthew 8:23-27 and Matthew 14:22-32 and for the Holy Spirit to give you that peace beyond what the world can give? Ask them to pray with you and journal the prayer and its effect on your storm.

Please remember Jesus said in John 14:27 (NASB)

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

•This week's encounter

Read this with the group from their *Participants' Guides* to help them prepare for this week's encounter with His Presence:

God has always spoken to His people. This week we will read about a little boy and his first encounter with the Presence of God. That little boy became one of the greatest prophets who ever lived. His name was Samuel. We will also reflect upon a verse worth memorizing found in Deuteronomy and learn that God is always with His people. We will also turn to

the gospel of John and then to the gospel of Matthew and read a little about what Jesus promised concerning His Presence. Do not feel like you have to read all these verses every day. Spread them out during the week. Perhaps read an Old Testament passage one day and then a New Testament passage the next. Come to your small group session ready to discuss what you have learned or find an opportunity to talk with a friend about this weeks encounter.

May you hear Him call your name this week and may you answer, "*Speak to me Lord, I am listening.*"

Week 2: (25 Verses) 1 Samuel 3:1-10, Deuteronomy 31:6, John 14:15- 26, Matthew 28:16-20

•End with prayer: (5 minutes)

Recommended worship songs to take you into *the Presence*.
All the songs can be found at www.freshwaterworship.com

Bethel Music "We Will Not Be Shaken" CD/DVD

- 1) *No Longer Slaves- Helters*
- 2) *In Over My Head (Crash Over Me)*
- 3) *You Don't Miss a Thing*
- 4) *We Will Not Be Shaken*

SESSION 3



HEARING THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Begin with prayer:** (5 minutes)
- **Door opening question:** (10 minutes)

Here is your Door opening discussion question for this week. Use this question to get people talking and connecting.

1) Imagine what life would be like if you lost one of your five senses (hearing, sight, vision, taste, or touch). Which of these five would you find the most difficult to lose and why?

- **God moments:** (10 minutes)

Share God moments like you did last week. Go first in order to start the sharing.

A God moment is an instance during your week when the Presence of God showed up and you noticed Him. Share about a time this week when you heard God speaking or moving or when you felt His Presence. It can be something you wrote about in your journal or a recent encounter with God that was important to you.

•Video & Notes:

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•Discussion questions: (20 minutes)

1) Review last week's journal scriptures - Ask one person to relate to only one scripture in relationship to hearing His voice and being aware of His Presence. What specific word(s) indicate the Presence of God?

Deuteronomy 31:6 – (I'm with you. I will never fail or forsake you.)

John 14:15- 26 – (If you love me & keep my commandments, I will show myself and make my abode with you.)

Matthew 28:16-20 – (I am with you to the end of the age.)

2) Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10 together. Jonathan Helsler related to hearing God's voice akin to a radio and that a lifestyle of thankfulness helps you stay tuned in. Jonathon also related this to living a lifestyle of *"Speak to me Lord, I am listening"* as Samuel did in 1 Samuel 3:1-10. Describe how you have experienced His Presence or heard His voice in an everyday encounter. What have you found that helped you "stay tuned in"?

3) Are you as Melissa Helsler shared, living a life of consistency that reflects His good nature? Do you actually believe He

is good? Why or why not? Do you need prayer? Ask a group member or a trusted friend and journal what happens.

4) Father Rick says anyone can learn to discern. Where are you in that process? Have you made mistakes? What were they? What did you learn from your mistakes in discernment?

5) Read John 10:1-21 together. In these verses, Jesus does most of the speaking. He says in verses 14 and 27, *"I am the Good Shepherd. I know my sheep and they know me... My sheep hear My voice, I know them, and they follow me."* He also describes what happens when there is a hired servant. Father Rick described the process of discernment as being learned.

What do you think Jesus is saying here about your ability to recognize His voice and follow Him? Explain how you knew the difference between hearing His voice versus a physical or emotional reaction to stimuli as Father Rick described.

Have you discerned the difference between God's voice and a thief or robber? What was that like?

Are you struggling to discern the voice of your Good Shepherd and need prayer? Ask someone in the group to pray with you and journal what happens.

•**This week's encounter**

Read this with the group from their Participants' Guides to help them prepare for this week's encounter with His Presence:

What happens when we invite the Presence of God into our lives on a regular basis? This week we will be looking

at selections from scripture that give us a glimpse of just some of what we experience when we live in His Presence. We call this the Spirit-filled life. Each day of this week invite the Presence of the Lord to come during the reading of His Word. Come to your small group session ready to discuss what you have discovered. If you are doing this study alone, find an opportunity to talk with a friend about this week's encounter. May you "stay tuned" into His Presence this week!

Week 3: (14 verses) Galatians 5:16-26, Isaiah 26:3, Acts 1:4-8

- End with prayer: (5 minutes)

Recommended worship songs to take you into *the Presence*.
All the songs can be found at www.freshwaterworship.com

Bethel Music "We Will Not Be Shaken" CD/DVD

- 1) *Nearness*
- 2) *Home*
- 3) *Jesus We Love You*

SESSION 4



BECOMING LIKE HIM

- **Begin with prayer:** (5 minutes)
- **Door opening question:** (10 minutes)

Here is your Door opening discussion question for this week. Use this question to get people talking and connecting.

1) Think about your closest friends and/or family for a minute. What do these relationships produce in your life and why? Are these things all good? Are there bad things produced by these relationships as well?

- **God moments**

Share God moments like you did last week. Go first in order to start the sharing.

A God moment is an instance during your week when the Presence of God showed up and you noticed Him. Share about a time this week when you heard God speaking or moving or when you felt His Presence. It can be something you wrote about in your journal or a recent encounter with God that was important to you.

•Video & Notes:

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•Discussion questions: (20 minutes)

1) Review last week's Scriptures together. Share your thoughts as to how each of these passages will help you become more like Him.

Galatians 5:16 –26

Isaiah 26:3

Acts 1:4-8

2) Melissa Helsler shares how she is teaching her children to be dependent on the Holy Spirit and how calling out to Him shifted the atmosphere in their car. Have you had a moment like that? What was it? Recount a time when someone caught you in a non-Presence moment and how by just asking, the Holy Spirit shifted your experience with peace, joy and empowered you with kindness.

3) The Helsler's community have a saying : "*Dependency on the Holy Spirit is a badge of honor not our shame.*" Do you agree? Why or why not?

4) Father Rick describes how God and Jesus both got angry. In becoming like Jesus, how will you reconcile your anger with

Galatians 5:16-26? Do you think what Father Rick said about anger used the right way is the courage to confront evil is true? How does that relate to the three passages listed above?

5.) Describe an event in your life where you were wounded and how time, process and community helped you walk in The Presence and display forgiveness, gentleness, and self-control. Or where in that process are you? Does Father Rick's personal testimony of losing three of his colleagues and the process he has embraced encourage you in your process?

6.) Read Acts 9:1-18 together. These verses are about how Saul, the murdering zealot and enemy of God's people, was transformed into Paul the Apostle who wrote most of the New Testament. Saul encounters the risen Christ and is blinded.

Answer these questions.

Who shows up to pray for the blinded Saul?

Why does this individual come to Paul's aid?

What exactly does this person do to help Saul and why do you think he does what he does?

In this story from Acts 9, what happened because a Christian decided to live in the Presence and become more like Him?

Spend a moment asking the Holy Spirit what might happen if you decided to be more intentional about living in the Presence of God. What might it cost you to do so? Would it be worth the cost?

•**This week's encounter**

Read this with the group from their *Participants' Guides* to help them prepare for this week's encounter with His Presence:

This week we will read and meditate on two of the most familiar passages of scripture found in the Gospels, the parable of the prodigal son and the story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well. As you sit with these passages and invite the Presence of God to meet you, ask God to show you something new. Come to your small group session ready to discuss what you have discovered. If you are doing this study alone, find an opportunity to talk with a friend about this week's encounter.

May you recognize a moment where you are becoming more like Him this week!

Week 4: (47 verses) John 4:1-26, Luke 15:11-32

•End with prayer: (5 minutes)

Recommended worship songs to take you into *the Presence*.

All the songs can be found at www.freshwaterworship.com

Bethel Music "We Will Not Be Shaken" CD/DVD

1) *You Don't Miss a Thing*

2) *No Longer Slaves*

Sallie Mosely Video

1) *You Are I AM*

SESSION 5

A stylized sunburst graphic consisting of several horizontal lines of varying lengths radiating from a central point below the word 'SESSION 5'.

TRUE WORSHIP

- **Begin with prayer:** (5 minutes)
- **Door opening question:** (10 minutes)

Here is your Door Opening discussion question for this week. Use this Question to get people talking and connecting.

1) Our lives are full of synthetic or imitation materials and things. As a group, can you name and all agree on an imitation or synthetic thing that is as good as the real thing? Make a list to see how many fake things you can all agree on are as good or better than the real thing.

- **God moments:** (10 minutes)

Share God moments like you did last week. Go first in order to start the sharing.

A God moment is an instance during your week when the Presence of God showed up and you noticed Him. Share about a time this week when you heard God speaking or moving or when you felt His Presence. It can be something you wrote about in your journal or a recent encounter with God that was important to you.

•Video & Notes

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•Discussion questions (20 minutes)

1) Review last week's Scriptures together.

John 4:1-26 – How did the Samaritan woman demonstrate true worship? When did she know that she was in the presence? How did that lead to others being in His Presence?

What is meant by the phrase, “in spirit and in truth” and “true worshipers?”

Do you worship the Father in spirit and truth? Are you a true worshiper?

Luke 15:11-32 – How did the prodigal son find his way to true worship? How did that lead to being in the Father's Presence?

2) Jonathan shared a story of his little girl and her new dress. She wanted her father to tell her who she was and what he thought of her. True worship comes out of knowing how God sees you. How do you think God sees you? Is it a “*true*” perception? What does the Bible say about you? In Isaiah 43:4, what are God's thoughts toward you? Share or journal your response to this scripture.

3) Father Rick and Sallie talk about finding your note and how we resonate with the song God sings over us. Have you found your note? Do you resonate with what they were describing? Is this study striking a chord? What is the song God is singing over you? Are you singing it back to Him?

4.) Are you choosing a life's occupation or a vocational life according to the Presence of God? What do you need to change so that you can choose living in the Presence? How is this a part of being a true worshipper?

5.) Read Romans 12:1-2. These two verses are great to memorize. Here we find the heart of truly spirit-filled worship. According to this passage, what does worship look like?

Many times we are afraid to engage in things that might make us seem out of place. What do these verses say we should be doing? How does this relate to what Melissa shared about the worship event in Great Britain called *David's Tent*? Do you think you could ever be so caught up in worshipping God that like the Helsers, you don't even know there are people around?

• **This week's encounter:** (5 minutes)

Read this with the group from their *Participants' Guides* to help them prepare for this week's encounter with His Presence:

This week's encounter is all about beginning to develop a regular habit of reading scripture and engaging in spiritual journaling. Ask the Holy Spirit where He would like you to begin reading and do so. If you are unfamiliar with the Bible, we

suggest starting with the Gospel of John or the book of Acts. Just like past weeks, invite the Presence of the Lord to come during the reading of His Word. If your small group continues to meet, come to your next meeting ready to discuss what you have discovered. If you are doing this study alone, find an opportunity to talk with a friend about this week's encounter. Share what you are hearing with a trusted friend.

May you find the hidden treasure God has buried for you as you intentionally practice the Presence of God and continue this journey with Him!

•End with prayer: (5 minutes)

Recommended worship songs to take you into *the Presence*. All the songs can be found at www.freshwaterworship.com

Bethel Music "We Will Not Be Shaken" CD/DVD

- 1) *Who Can Compare to You?*
- 2) *Ever Be*
- 3) *You Are My One Thing*
- 4) *Home*
- 5) *Jesus We Love You*

A BRIEF GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL JOURNALING



There is a difference between a common journal and a spiritual journal.

Common journals tend to chronicle our life similar to a diary. They recount events and record information and ideas for later use or remembrance. A spiritual journal is a bit more specialized. A spiritual journal focuses on our relationship with God. A spiritual journal is a record of your intimate conversation with God. It will help us recall what we asked God and His responses. In a spiritual journal there is as much (if not more) recorded listening, as there is writing.

Spiritual journaling is focused on inward thoughts and emotions and so we answer different questions than we would in a common journal. A common journal answers the questions *“What did I do?”* or *“What happened today?”*

A spiritual journal answers the questions: *“What was significant about my day?”* or *“What is going on inside of me at this time?”* or maybe *“What is God saying about this or that?”* When we engage in spiritual journaling, we seek to get to the root of life’s existential questions:

"Who did God make me to be?" "What am I to do?"
And *"Why?"*

In a nutshell, a common journal is a record of our adventures, but a spiritual journal is an adventure all its own! Spiritual journaling is all about discovery and our relationship with God. Here are some steps to get you started.

5 STEPS TOWARDS SPIRITUAL JOURNALING

1) **Use this journal and keep it handy:** The pages that follow are yours to fill. And we hope this won't be your last journal. Please consider following this one up with the next in *The Presence Series* and continue your conversations with God.

2) **Set and keep a time and place to journal:** Make a regular appointment to meet with God. Keep your appointment sacred. God is the most important person in your life. Talking with Him deserves priority. Choose a place and time that fits your temperament and will allow for your undivided attention. If you are a morning person, make your appointments in the morning. If you are a night owl, meet with God at night. Do you have a comfortable spot where you can meet with God? Where would He like to meet with you? If you do not have a place in mind already, ask Him for guidance. It could take some time to develop a regular habit of meeting with God if you have not done so yet, so be patient with yourself. However, be persistent. It will be worth your effort to develop a regular habit of meeting with God.

3) **Be prepared: bring your Bible when you journal and read it:** Spiritual journaling is not a substitute for the regular reading and

is through His Word. When you combine regular devotional reading of scripture with regular spiritual journaling, you will have a powerful avenue for God to speak to you and form you into the likeness of Christ. We have included suggested passages of scripture for you to read and think about each week in “This Week’s Encounter” section of the viewing guide. Always keep your Bible in the same place just like you do your car keys, purse or wallet. This way you will be able to find it when you need it! Make sure you always have what you need to journal by keeping it all stored together in the same place.

4) Always include these key elements in your spiritual journal.

a) **The date** - you may want to reference your thoughts on a particular day so make sure you know when you are writing. In the pages that follow, we have given you a place to record the date. Noting the place and occasion might also be helpful in this regard.

b) **Scripture** - By referencing scripture you accomplish two important things: 1) You are prioritizing the reading of God’s Word for yourself and 2) You are able to relate the thoughts and prayers of your journal to your reading for the day. Again, we have provided a place for you to record the verses of scripture you read.

c) **A greeting to God** - When you write a letter to someone, you always begin with a greeting that names the recipient of the letter. A greeting often sets the tone of a conversation. What name for God are you most comfortable using? Is it “Father” or maybe “Jesus” or perhaps it’s “Holy Spirit”? Some people use a more intimate greeting like “Daddy” or “Papa”. For others the greeting is simply “Dear God”. Every spiritual journal is a conversation; it’s a prayer written from a place of increasing familiarity.

Use a greeting that feels right for you.

d) **Your deepest thoughts and emotions** - Your spiritual journal is not a place to write your commentary on scripture or a list of things to do. It may start with some of these less personal expressions but these should always be a way to get to deeper places rather than a roadblock to them. A spiritual journal is a place to talk with God about your most heartfelt ideas, questions, dreams and desires. Often it takes time to get to deeper places in our conversations with God and others. Some people can just jump into the deep end while others swim out to deeper places gradually. As long as the goal is to be open and transparent with God, we will end up getting there eventually. Just remember to be honest with yourself and with God.

e) **Space for listening** - Perhaps the most valuable part of one's spiritual journal is the blank space between our prayers and what we hear God saying. This space represents the place we listen for the voice of God. What comes after is what we have heard. Sometimes it's a question, sometimes a statement. Occasionally scripture comes to mind or an image that leads to a doodle or two. The blank space is precious because of the fruit it produces. Don't be afraid of the blank space. Remember you are only half of the conversation, so quiet yourself and listen for what God says to you. What is on God's heart for you today?

f) **Your commitments** - As we end our journal entry, we should try and be action oriented, even if the action is a small one. We are more than hearers only. We are doers of the Word. The last element in your spiritual journal has to do with the application of what you have learned about yourself or about God. It can be

a prayer of commitment giving God something that you have been holding onto, or it could be a prayer of repentance where you determine to change your thinking about something. It might even be a prayer of thanksgiving for what was just learned. Always end your spiritual journal entry well. You are not saying good-bye to God when you stop writing. Instead, you are inviting Him into your life in a deeper way. We have included a reminder for this element at the bottom of each page that follows.

5) **Share from your journal:** Most of what you write in your journal is private and should be kept just between you and God. But sometimes as we get revelation about ourselves, our circumstances or our relationship with God, we will feel prompted to share with others. This is especially true if one is engaging in spiritual journaling with a group of friends. Spiritual journaling is a journey with God and sometimes we have companions and comrades that go with us. Value one another and mark areas in your journal that you may want to share when you meet with a group or with someone you care about. Sometimes the things that end up in our journals are for others, as much, if not more, than they are for us. Keep this in mind when you write.

SAMPLE JOURNAL PAGES



DATE: 7/4/2015

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 8-23-27*

(Location) *Vacation on the Lake, Yay!*

(Greeting) *Good Morning Holy Spirit! Come and sit with me. I am all Ears! Teach me from Your Word!*

(Thoughts & Emotions)

Thank you Father for this rest in such a beautiful place. Thank you for Freedom and for the joy of your Presence. Thank you for the lake and for family and friends. God you are so good! Teach me as I read your Word this morning. It strikes me, Jesus, that you slept in the boat! Wow! I don't think that I could do that. How did you do that? I get so worried with the kids around water and anxious they might fall in and drown and this lake is calm. I can't imagine what it must have been like for the disciples to be out there during a storm. But you were at peace and you made the storm stop and waves stop with a rebuke. Wow!

(Listening & Hearing)

Holy Spirit- I can do better than that! Remember Creation! Genesis 1:1-2 Holy Spirit- I invented peace.



.....
(Key)
.....

When I face storms inside of me or around me, the Presence of Jesus can bring me peace because he invented it. He is never troubled by the storms inside me or around me. I can be like Jesus in the storm.
.....

.....
(Actions in the Presence of God)
.....

Jesus, Help me to be like you the next time something in me or around me is less than peaceful. Help me to invite you into the boat of my life and let me find the same rest you were able to find despite the storm. More than that, help me to speak to the storm and see it come to a calm. I love you for being my peace! I commit to inviting you into my anxiety today and bringing peace. AMEN!
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If going through these prompts was a review then you know there is always a greater revelation of God's Presence. Every question you have or will ever have has an answer in His Presence. Put a stake in the ground today by dating this Study Guide Journal with your decision to saying "yes" and "more" to God's Presence.

Now take the time to record in your journal your greater revelation.

THE PRESENCE

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE & SPIRITUAL JOURNAL



We love testimonies! We want to hear from you!
Please drop us a note of encouragement or an email:

testimonies@liveinthepresence.com

Our next episode of *The Presence* is titled,
“Take Every Thought Captive”

Website: www.LiveInThePresence.com

Website: www.FreshWaterWorship.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/liveinthepresence

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