

The Lord's Day Morning

December 4, 1949

"Living in the Presence of God"

Matthew 28:16-20

Key Verse – Matthew 28:18

The Reverend Dr. Girard Lowe

Introduction:

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale tells of being at a railroad station and noticing an extensive display of magazines and books dealing with the common problems of living. He said to the young saleslady, "I notice you have a great deal of this kind of literature." "Yeah," she answered, "and I am telling you that kind of stuff sure does sell." "More than murder mysteries and movie magazines?" he inquired. "Yeah, more than all of those and even out-top all love stories. Believe me this self-improvement or self-help literature is what we count on to pay the profit of this business." Dr. Peale asked, "What is the reason?" "The answer is easy," she replied. "The poor things are all tangled up. There are so many things they want to get away from, mostly themselves, I suppose." Then she added, "I guess they are looking for someone to release them from all their troubles."

I suppose this sales girl in the railroad book shop has about summarized much of our modern day method of living and the condition of so many of our people. Many of those people we know and much of the time, we our own selves, are in a state when we need to be helped. We are in trouble about something, or we are afraid of something or the weight of responsibility is about to crush out our live. Many people are reading any and every book they can secure hoping to find something to help them. Some even turn to fortune telling, hoping they can help them.

I am making it very bold this morning to come and tell you that I believe there is a prescription for life which, if followed, would relieve us of most, if not all, of our worry and fear and concern. We have prescription for many things in life:

- a. Doctor comes and prescribes medicine for us. We go and have the prescription filled and take the medicine and in most of cases when there is a physical ailment we obtain relief.
- b. We get a recipe for making a cake and we follow it and when we do generally, the cake will come out and be very delicious.
- c. We have directions about how to use certain mechanical instruments and when we follow the directions everything goes along alright.

But we, on occasions, refuse to follow the directions and think we know better, and when we do, things go wrong.

- a. Gladys thinking she knew best how much water to put in her Presto Cooker and it was nearly ruined.
- b. Mrs. Lowe making a knitted cap for Lowell and she decided she would change the

directions slightly and I found her taking out a portion of it and making it over.

I cannot believe that God has put man here in the world to live and not make provision for that man to know how he should live so that he can find the largest degree of happiness and the greatest amount of usefulness. I do not believe God ever intended for those of us who are His children to have our lives filled with fear, trouble, discontent, tension, nervousness, and unhappiness, which so many of us have. I believe He has made a way whereby we can rest about those things and live a life of comparative calmness and of great usefulness.

I know I am undertaking a great task this morning to try and tell you how you can live in such a manner. But I believe I know the prescription for such a life, both for yours and mine and all the other people. That prescription is very simple and all mankind can have filled in their own lives. It is not so expensive that the poorest of us cannot have it. It is not so complicated that the most ignorant of us cannot understand it.

That prescription is found in this simple thought, "Living in the Presence of God." I believe that anyone who live their lives in the conscious presence of God will find that life can be lived happily and usefully. This life is too complicated. It has too many devious paths and it takes too much wisdom for us to wind our way through it without a Helper who has more wisdom and power than we have and I firmly believe that God meant for us to find all we need in life from Him.

I. Fears

1. Take the matter of fears. We are told that much of so-called physical sickness is caused by fear. The path to the door of a psychiatrist is beaten smooth by people who are afraid. I can understand how people would be afraid and that fear should so dominate their lives that they would become ill, but I do not believe God ever meant it should be that way.
2. Isaiah 41:10 tells us, "Fear not, for I am with thee and etc."
 - a. What we need to drive fear out of our life is to realize that we are walking in the presence of God.
 - b. Many fear every conceivable sort of thing.
 1. They are afraid their house will burn.
 2. They are afraid something will happen to their wife or children.
 3. They are afraid their business will go bankrupt. They are afraid of everything. They cannot make decisions concerning anything because they are afraid.

If we could just know that we have God walking along with us, that we have His protection, that the failure of our lives is in His hands, then we could face life unafraid.

Let me give you true illustrations given by Dr. Peale, page 173, "A Guide to Confident Living." A man came to him who was extremely nervous. The man was afraid his house would burn down and that something would happen to his wife and children. Dr. Peale told him to realize the presence of Christ when he walked down the street to imagine he could hear the sound of Christ's feet as they hit the pavement. That since he was so filled with fear he could not sleep, that each night before he went to bed to put a chair beside the bed and to imagine that Christ was

sitting in that chair and then to say, “Lord, I’ll not worry since I know you are watching over me.” The man said what some of you are saying now, “That sounds foolish.” But just the same, the man tried it, chair and all, and on the consciousness of the presence of Christ he found relief from that awful fear that was about to cause him to lose his mind.

The trouble with many of us is that we are unwilling to try the simple formula of living our lives as God meant us to live them. You need not go on in fear. Take God at His Word and think of the fact that we are in His presence. He is with us.

Barbara was going into the operating room to have her tonsils out. We put our lives into the hands of God and let Him go with us.

II. Take Troubles

1. Let me say a few things about troubles.

a. In the first place, troubles are not a sign that God does not love us or cares for us.

b. Most of the troubles we have are caused by our own failings and mistakes. Troubles which could have been avoided had we been following someone who knew the way. Someone who is wiser than we are.

c. But much of our trouble is real and no matter whether it has come because of our foolish mistakes or not it is here and we must face it.

1. Deut. 33:27 – “The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.”

2. Suppose you and I would simply yield ourselves to God when these times of trouble come. Instead of doing as the salesgirl said looking for someone to release us from our troubles, we should turn unto God and in His power and strength find quiet and peace.

III. We have responsibilities

1. Some of these...

a. Parents spoil or regiment

b. Business men

c. Teachers

d. Preachers

2. Matthew 28:20 – “All power given – and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.”

a. Ephesians 1:19-20

3. Ask Him what to do

a. Some people have done this.

1. I do not see how they have lived without seeking guidance from God.

b. Horace and Jim putting practice of Christ’s principles into business and what a huge success they have made of it.

4. Dr. Anderson, Sr. having a heart attack in Nashville. Doctor ran across street. Did not have time to decide what medicine to give and he asked God to guide him and He did.

5. You parents, teachers, etc.

Conclusion:

1. You can have this presence of God in your lives all the time.
2. But you must live consciously in His presence.
 - a. Cannot go place He will not go with you.
 - b. Use language not spoken in His presence.
 - c. Tell stories not tell when He was around.
3. We cannot be conscious of the presence of God only when we want it and not live in His presence all the time.