

STUDY GUIDE

Discovering the Joy of God's Brilliant Presence

"One thing do I desire and that will I seek after...." (Psalm 27:4)

I. What Do You Desire?

A. Definition of Desire from Webster's Dictionary

Definition of *Desire* as a Transitive Verb

1: to long or hope for: exhibit or feel desire for success; knew that men still *desired* or wanted her

2a: to express a wish for: REQUEST they *desire* an immediate answer

2b: to express a wish to: ASK *desired* them to reconsider

3: invite

4: to feel the loss of; to have or feel desire

Definition of *Desire* as a Noun

1. Conscious impulse toward something that promises enjoyment or satisfaction in its attainment ridding oneself of all *desires*
2. Longing, craving; like a teenagers' *desire* for independence; for a passionate relationship including a sexual relationship

3. Something longed or hoped for: something desired; “You are my heart's *desire*.”
4. Usually, formal request or petition for some action to take place

B. Insights from Psalm 16:11 NKJV

“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence [is] fullness of joy; At Your right hand [are] pleasures forevermore.”

C. Insights from Psalm 27:4-8 NKJV

“One [thing] I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle, He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD. Hear, O LORD, [when] I cry with my voice! Have mercy also upon me and answer me. When You said], “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.”

D. Insights from Psalm 145:16 NASB

“You open Your Hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.”

II. Show Me Your Glory!

A. Insights from Exodus 33:13-19 – From the Life of Moses

“Now then, If I have found favor in Your sight in any way, please let me know Your ways so that I may know You, in order that I may find favor in Your sight. 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 on 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, "Please, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show compassion to whom I will show compassion."

B. Insights from the Life of Joshua - The Successor of Moses

When Moses would enter the Temple and would not be seen, for hours, the company of people would then go to life as usual. Except for young Joshua who waited outside the door of the Tent of Meeting. As a result, when Moses would proceed out of the Tabernacle, the glory of God was shining ever so brightly upon His face. The first to see the reflected glory of God upon Moses, was none other than Joshua!

Joshua is also known for the art meditating or musing upon the promises and principles of God's Word to bring them to pass. According to Joshua 1:8, *"This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."* Wow! Joshua chewed on the words given to him by God through Moses and thus he found success. Should we not learn this art of meditation of focusing on Biblical principles and bear much fruit? Yes, meditating on the Word of God is also a form of releasing the Glory of God into our lives.

For more on this subject see the book, **The Lost Art of Practicing His Presence**, Chapter Seven on *Reflecting on the God Who Promises*.

C. Insights from the Life of Mary - The Mother of Jesus

Can you begin to imagine what Mary pondered on? Just think – the Son of God growing inside of you. You feel His heartbeat; you feel His foot move; you bring Him to birth! Truly, one of closest people ever to Jesus was His

Mother Mary. *Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.* (Luke 2:19). She knew Him better than anyone, yet just like us, she wanted to know Him still better.

Mary becomes our living example of what it means to really know “*Christ in us the Hope of Glory*” and to come into intimacy with the lover of our soul. Let’s join in her model of joyful meditating on the person of Lord Christ Jesus. I Can Only Imagine!

III. Personal Keys Given to Me

A. An Encounter with the Voice of the Lord

The voice of the Lord came to me in Toronto, Canada at a Catch the Fire Conference in October 1994. While resting in the Lord, I heard, *“I will teach you to release the highest weapon of spiritual warfare - the brilliance of My Great Presence.”*

This one phrase answered years of questions I had been asking the Holy Spirit. One sentence from the Lord brought clarity! Why God Himself is the highest weapon of Spiritual Warfare!

B. A Revelatory Word Released while in Prophetic Worship

The voice of the Holy Spirit arrested me one day and stated, *“Disciplines! Disciplines? You cannot work or earn Your way towards or into My presence! You do not have enough discipline to have a Spiritual Discipline! They are Spiritual Privileges anyway!”*

This word was a course changer and realigned me. *“They are Privileges anyway!”*

C. An Encounter in a Dream

“I will reveal the hidden streams of the prophetic to you.”

This was spoken to me in a dream in 1991. This was an invitation from the Holy Spirit into fresh understandings of “old” revelatory ways. This brought

me into a search where I discovered truths hidden away like jewels with the desert fathers and Christian Mystics.

IV. Personal Keys Which Unlock Doorways

A. Visionary Experience – Seven Doorways

I ministered 5 days in a row in Chicago, at YWAM's first School of Worship, Prayer, and Spiritual Warfare. In personal walk with the Lord, I had been in pursuit of "Great Union with Christ Jesus".

Being a husband, a father, an international speaker, an intercessor, and one with a prophetic ministry, I took my time alone rather seriously and I guarded it with jealousy.

So, in the evening times, at spent that precious time waiting before the Lord, preparing myself for the next day's assignment. As I did, I entered a profound interactive revelatory encounter. In this trance type experience, I saw seven consecutive doorways with words written at the top of each entrance.

The following was the list of names I saw.

1. Invitation to the Inward Journey
2. Forgiveness
3. Cleansed by the blood
4. Lowliness of Heart
5. Grace (from God)
6. Mercy (towards men)
7. Union With Christ

This encounter was a personal demarcation in my life and ministry.

B. Distilling Seven Personal Keys

As I began to walk in this somewhat overlooked spiritual pathway, I distilled seven personal keys:

1. It was a road less traveled.
2. It led me to reading the Desert Fathers and Christian Mystics which became valuable guideposts for my journey and later for many others.
3. Encouragement came from other believers as I talked with experienced, older saints in the Lord.
4. Comfort resulted as I found this pathway to be one the Holy Spirit had already been giving me Lessons as my personal tutor and teacher.
5. I rediscovered a sweet place of worship which brought peace to my sometimes-restless soul.
6. Psalm 23 became a Psalm for Living, not primarily a Psalm for Eulogies.
7. It was possible and God's will for every believer to be a carrier of God's most brilliant presence!

V. At The Gate Called Beautiful

A. Insights from Acts 3:2-10 NIV

"Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and

they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.”

B. An Encounter at a Prayer Retreat

When ministering at a prayer retreat with leaders from prayer groups brought together from multiple states, I saw the Gate called Beautiful as depicted in Acts 3. Some say that is also the Gateway that Jesus will enter thru into Jerusalem upon His return. While other Gates in the Wall surrounding the Old City are open, this one is literally closed, or sealed to this day.

In the Spirit, I was at the Gate called Beautiful and I saw a living substance sitting on the other side of the Gate. I was invited to reach my hand thru the translucent barrier and touch this realm. As I did, the awe and wonder of God was surrounding me. I reached my hand into the iridescent glowing material, and it was filled with life. It appeared to be some form of the Zoe Life of God and shimmered with the rainbow colors of God. I then looked over my shoulder and saw multitudes of people waiting outside the Gate Called Beautiful waiting for a touch of God, much like the lame man as recorded in Acts 3.

Suddenly, I knew that a key to the joy filled life of moving in the miraculous, was a people who would pass thru the Beauty Realm of God into the very Zoe Life of God and then become Carriers of His Brilliant Presence to the Multitudes of those waiting outside the Gate.

C. It's Time to Go from Glory to Glory

As I have prepared these materials, this encounter has been made fresh to me and a Word has come to me. *“It's time to go from glory to glory. It's time to enter The Gate called Beautiful and then cross back over and give away this life-giving glory realm of God. Learn to how to go back and forth and be Carriers of the Beauty Realm of God.*

This is the place of where miracles are created. This is the place where you have to two-way gaze. Yes, where you are fully focused on the Beauty of Christ and then fully focused on the people waiting outside the gate.”

VI. Wasted On Jesus

A. Mary of Bethany - A Look at John 12:1-3

“Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him.

Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”

B. Extravagant Worship

Jesus is in Bethany, the village where Lazarus, Martha, and Mary live. While there, He attends a supper at the invitation of and in the home of a Pharisee known as Simon the leper. Lazarus is also one of the dinner guests, as are Jesus' disciples and others, perhaps some of Simon's friends. Martha is there to serve.

It appears that this was not a small, intimate meal but rather a large dinner party. Suddenly, in the middle of everything, Mary appears, carrying an ornate bottle of very expensive perfume. Seemingly oblivious to the presence of perhaps two dozen or more witnesses, she stands behind Jesus' feet, wetting them with her tears. Breaking open the vial of perfume, Mary first anoints Jesus' head, and then His feet. Then, kneeling down, she gently and lovingly wipes Jesus' feet with her hair.

Such a blatantly public display of intimate affection probably caused a sudden embarrassed silence from everyone else in the room. For some, that embarrassed silence quickly became shocked outrage, but Mary just flat didn't care. She was deeply in love with a Man—a Messiah—who had forgiven her and saved her, and treated her with a love, dignity, and respect that no one else had ever afforded her.

Whatever else she may once have been or done, no matter how she may have wasted her life before, she is different now. Jesus has changed her.

Now Mary is bent on wasting her life on her Lord—the God who loved her and forgave her—and she doesn't care who knows about it or what anyone else thinks. For Mary, the expensive perfume means nothing; it is merely a symbol of the unrestrained love she feels in her spirit and of her determination from that day forward to waste her life on God.

Some of these same men might have even been in the room watching with bated breath to see what would follow this intimate act of Mary “letting her hair down.” But this time was different. No one had ever touched Mary the way Jesus had—in her inmost being. Many men had looked at Mary with lustful eyes.

No one had ever looked at her the way Jesus did. Everything about her was exposed to His penetrating gaze—her pain, her guilt, her shame, her longing to know true love. All of these found relief and fulfillment in Him. More importantly, Jesus saw Mary's inner beauty crying to be released. He forgave her and set her free. When Jesus saw Mary as she was, Mary saw Jesus as He was—Master, Lord, Savior, the Lover of her soul—and she had eyes for no one else anymore.

C. Wasting Our Fragrance

The longer I walk with the Lord, the more I realize how great a sinner I am. I become more aware of how far away from Him I have been and, in some senses, still am. At the same time, the more I walk with Him the more I realize how approachable He is. As we realize more and more who we are as sinners and as we recognize the magnitude of what Christ has done for us, the more our hearts will rise up in us like the heart of Mary of Bethany. We'll find ourselves saying, *“Lord, I want my life to be a drink offering poured out upon You.”*

Each of us is just as close to God as we want to be. He is always there, ready to draw us deeper. Oh, how I want to pour out my life as a drink offering before Him! As for me and my house, I want to waste my life on Jesus! Want to join me? The revelation of forgiveness and righteousness freely given to us by Christ results in radical, authentic worship. But we need to learn to be quiet before the Lord, to take a little time to let the tears of our hearts pour out to Him. Each of us has a unique and precious fragrance that only we can give to be “wasted” upon our Messiah.

The one who has been forgiven much, loves much. How much have you been forgiven? What fragrance can you pour out in honor of the King of kings?

Someone else may think that your distinct fragrance “stinks”; you might feel the same way about mine. What’s important is that we take what we have and “waste” it on the Lord. No matter what others may think of our “fragrance,” when we pour it out as a love offering to God it becomes in His nostrils a sweet-smelling incense, not only acceptable, but greatly desired and longed for!

This too is a part of our joyful discovery of God’s brilliant presence. It fills the room. The fragrance gets on our clothes. We carry it with us wherever we go. We are changed. Yes, we are ruined by the love of the man Christ Jesus the Lord.

For more on this subject see the book, **The Lost Art of Practicing His Presence**, Chapter Four on *Extravagant Worship*.

VII. A Prayer Acknowledging Your Presence

Loving Father, we are so grateful to be able to come into Your very throne room by the mystery and majesty of grace and the completed work of the cross of Calvary. One thing do we desire and that will we seek after, that we might behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in Your Temple! Oh thank You Jesus! Like Moses, we cry out, “Show us Your Glory!” Yes, Lord, reveal Your Goodness to us by the Spirit of illumination and revelation.

We want our own Treasure Chest to be filled with God Encounters of the jewels of Your Magnificent Presence. Give us a glimpse, like you gave to Joshua. Let us feel You jumping for joy, like You gave Mary. Let us see and experience Your empowering presence at the Gate called Beautiful, like you gave to Peter. Let us pour out everything we have in extravagant worship like Mary of Bethany. Oh, for the Joy of Discovering Your Brilliant Presence! We thank You! We thank You! We worship You! You alone are worthy! Amen and Amen!