

# A God that is Close

A Reflection on Hope and Perseverance

## Introduction

Saints of the Highest, it is essential that we comprehend and recognize the closeness of our God. We live in a world that's dominated by living by the five senses instead of faith, and this mindset can begin to influence even the most seasoned believers. As the world continues to get darker, it is becoming increasingly crucial for the people of God to know their God. I am talking about knowing the God of the bible, not just knowing the scriptures, but who the scriptures point to- Jesus Christ. Jesus is a real person that is presently sitting at the right hand of God the father and dwelling within His saints simultaneously by His Spirit. Our lives are often filled with challenges, uncertainties, and moments of despair. It is during these times that our faith in Jesus must be more than church attendance; you need to know for yourself that He is close!

## The Great Betrayal

**Genesis 6:5-6** And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of His heart was only evil continually. Verse 6: And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at His heart. The ESV version says: And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. The word regret means sad, disappointed, or wishing one had made a different decision in the past. (The compassionate, slow to angry, loving God was devastated at the betrayal of mankind) (We were in error, we rebelled, we walked away, we broke God's heart and somehow God gets all the heat from us) God is chasing us! IT had to be exceedingly bad- for God to say, I wish I had not made man! God was heartbroken! The days of fellowship with man in perfect union and closeness was over. The fellowship that occurred in Genesis chapter 2 was no more. Genesis 3:9- and the Lord called unto Adam and said unto him, where are you? Can you imagine the type of fellowship where the one who is completely whole cries out and says where are you? Sounds like Jesus when He was on the cross-asking God, why have you forsaken me? God was asking Adam, "what happened?" We know that God is God and perfect in all His ways, but we tend to forget that God has feelings too, We know that God as powerful and He is- feelings were hurt and can experience heartbreak and He grieves. (Eph 4:30) And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

**I want to put the spotlight on God for a change instead of us and our problems and to remind us that our God understands pain, loss, disappointment and heartache, not just you and me.**

**Hebrews 4:15** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like us, yet without sin. He understands us.

## God is still asking, “What happened?”

Remember how close to God you were after being born again! Remember that passion and zeal you had for the Lord! Now this is not a condemning message! I am not here to beat you up or pull you down as I am talking to myself more than anyone, but this is a message of hope and joy! Why? Because of the closeness of the living God in spite of us! We are clothed in Him because of Jesus, united with Him and one with Him! The good news is that Jesus is in us! So, God is still asking, where are you? Not your work, your religion, your eloquent speech, but you. **God wants the raw, unfiltered you.** It's a relationship. If I cannot trust you with my honesty, then I am saying that you are not trustworthy, and this is how we treat God. We give him the mask, the superficial us; no, He wants the real *us*. The *US* that's easily irritated, annoyed, the *US* that doesn't feel like praying or whose spouse is getting on our last nerves. This is who God wants- the genuine us!

## Intimacy

Again, can you imagine the type of fellowship that was ongoing between Adam and God for God to ask where are you, Adam? The intimacy was tremendous! One act of disobedience destroyed that fellowship and God wanted it back by any means necessary! God missed us! and He knows that apart from him we were absolutely doomed! God desired the fellowship so much; He literally destroyed His son Jesus on the cross for us. Let me repeat myself, God always wanted that closeness to man, so much so that a man (CHRIST JESUS) is sitting at His right hand as I speak. Not an angel, a man. You and I was created to not only be close to God but inhabited by God. **2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 6:16** says: And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God, as God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. As a result of being washed in the blood of Jesus, we are closer to God than Adam. God breath in Adam the breath of life, The Lord Jesus breath into us- himself by the Holy Spirit. God visited/walked with Adam during the cool of the morning, today; God walks in us every day and everywhere during all times. (what a revelation)! This time God permanently stays.

## Edify the Church

It is my heart desire to edify the body of Christ and to remind them that our God is close, He is right there with you and I. John 14:16 Jesus says, and I will pray to the Father and He will give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever. Now knowing this, how are we to do life? We do life knowing that it is no longer by our might nor is it by our power but by His Spirit. With respect to God's closeness, scripture says in **Deuteronomy 4:7** For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us for whatever reason we may call upon him. **Hebrews 13:5**- ESV- Keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for God has said, never will I leave you nor forsake you. We must remind ourselves that God is not only with us, but in us. Knowing this, we would stay away from behavior and activities that offend Him, we would be bolder and more courageous, we would acknowledge Him more in all our affairs. We would be quick to hear and slow to speak and we would be careful about how we handle people.

Unfortunately, our circumstances speaks louder than the truth of God's word. We live in a world that does not walk by faith. This is why fellowship, reading the word and prayer is vital. As you begin to consistently seek him during your quiet time, His presence becomes tangible. He manifests Himself to you; God is real and God is close.

## The Power of Community

Faith is not only an individual journey but also a collective one. As members of a faith community, we are called to support and uplift one another. The Apostle Paul encourages us to "carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ" (**Galatians 6:2**).

In times of hardship, the strength of our faith community becomes a vital source of encouragement and resilience. We gather together to pray, to share our struggles, and to find comfort in the shared belief that God is with us. Through acts of kindness, words of encouragement, and the simple presence of one another, we embody the love of Christ and remind each other of the power of faith.

## Acts of Service

One of the most profound ways we can demonstrate our faith is through acts of service. Jesus taught us that "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (**Matthew 25:40**). By serving others, we not only fulfill God's commandment to love our neighbors, but we also strengthen our own faith.

Service can take many forms—volunteering at a local shelter, providing meals for those in need, offering a listening ear to someone who is struggling. Each act of service, no matter how small, is a testament to our faith and a reflection of God's love.

## Conclusion

As we navigate the complexities and challenges of life, let us hold steadfast to our faith. Let us draw strength from the stories of those who have gone before us, from the hope that God's promises bring, and from the support of our faith community. Remember that faith is not the absence of trials, but the assurance that God is with us through them all.

May we leave here today with hearts full of hope, minds focused on service, and spirits uplifted by the power of our faith. Amen.