

**Draw Near With Me, Go Far Together:
*Building & Teaching a Close Walk With God***

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**Practicing the Presence of God: Unceasing Prayer
and Meditation**

Introduction to Practicing the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence

- Nicolas Herman was a young soldier who lived in the 17th century and decided to become a monk after an intense conversion experience. He took the name, Brother Lawrence.
- He served as a cook and kitchen assistant for the monastery
- His duties consisted of food preparation, grocery shopping, cooking and serving, and repairing the sandals of his fellow monks
- He taught himself how to pray continually by devoting even the most mundane of his daily tasks and actions to God as a form of living prayer (1 Th 5:17; Romans 12:1)

Here are a few quotes from Brother Lawrence that can help us learn how to pray continually:

“There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful, than that of a continual conversation with God; those only can comprehend it who practice and experience it.”

“One way to re-collect the mind easily in the time of prayer, and preserve it more in tranquillity, is not to let it wander too far in other times: you should keep it strictly in the presence of God; and being accustomed to think of Him often, you will find it easy to keep your mind calm in the time of prayer, or at least to recall it from its wanderings.”

“The more we know Him, the more we will desire to know Him. As love

increases with knowledge, the more we know God, the more we will truly love Him. We will learn to love Him equally in times of distress or in times of great joy.”

Read

1Th. 5:16 Be joyful always; **17** pray continually; **18** give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Meditate

Be joyful always;
 pray continually;
 give thanks in all circumstances,
 for this is God’s will for you
 in Christ Jesus.

Reread and repeat the text out loud to yourself, memorizing it, allowing it to speak to you and your daily life and thought and feelings. Ponder it and ruminate on it as you take it into yourself. Chew on it and let it all sink in. Ask questions. Apply it. Let God’s Word work on your heart, on your mind, on your feelings, on your thoughts and memories, on your point of view and the way you see things. Allow the Word of God to change you, to speak to you. It’s ok if there are things that are challenging or difficult...allow yourself to wrestle with the text...soon your mind will calm and you will find yourself talking to God as you...

Pray

Pray about whatever naturally comes to mind. Pray about the text. Talk to God about what you are learning, feeling, thinking, and experiencing. Share yourself fully and completely with God in prayer. This is not rote prayer...this is not “saying a prayer.” This is sharing with God, talking to God, pouring out your heart to the God who loves you. This sharing with God might be in the form of thoughts, feelings, images, conversation...there are many different ways of sharing with God. Give back to God what you are receiving in reading and listening and prayer.

Contemplate

When words begin to fail, simply let them go. Rest silently in the presence of God. You may have moments where you feel moved to speak, that's okay...talk to God. Then just be with God without words. Allow yourself to sense God near you and within you and around you. Be with God as God is with you. Feel the Father's love. Feel the Son's concern. Feel the gift of God's presence within you through the Holy Spirit. Be with the Father, be at peace in the Son, and be filled with the Spirit.

Share

Share your experience or something that you learned about God or about yourself with another person. Draw them into your experience with you. Allow them to ask you questions. Use this time of sharing as a way of inviting another person to share in your experience of God. If you feel positive, then encourage and build up the other person. If you feel challenged, share that and open yourself to allow the other person to encourage and build up your faith. In either case, let yourself be drawn closer to God and to the other person as you share.

Recommended Resource: *Practicing the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence

Free in multiple formats for reading, download and listening at:

<https://www.ccel.org/ccel/lawrence/practice.html>

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