

Soaking: The Key to Intimacy with God

By Gary Oates

Draw Near

Intimacy with God begins when we radically pursue Him with our whole heart. King David wrote, *"When You said, 'Seek My face,' my heart said to You, 'Your face, O Lord, I shall seek'"* (Psalm 27:8). God invites us in James 4:8 to "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

God is saying to us, **"Seek my face! Draw near!"** *Our hearts are crying out, "YES!" But our flesh is screaming "NO!"* The sad part is our flesh usually wins.

We are instructed in Psalm 46:10 to *"Be still, and know that I am God."* The wording "be still" literally means to cease from striving. It means to let go and relax, to turn down the volume of the world and listen to the quiet whisper of God. It's getting still and coming into a place of rest. It means soaking in His Presence. The result is that you will know He is God.

The word "know" is literally an experiential knowledge of God. It's not being still and knowing about God. It's being still and knowing God experientially. You will experience God. You will know the Presence of God.

As we focus our heart, spirit, soul, mind, and body (the whole person) on His manifest Presence, we become oblivious to the natural physical world around us.

The key is where your focus is- on the things of God or on things of this world.

Bible reading and prayer is not enough. We must take time alone with Him, not asking for anything but more of Him, more of His fullness, more of His presence in our everyday lives.

God releases power through us as we dwell in intimacy with Him. The natural outworking of His Presence is miracles.

How to Soak in God's Presence

How do we soak? We soak like a sponge. Put a dry sponge in a bucket of water and slowly the water permeates the sponge. This is the same as soaking in God's presence. The more we soak, the more we become filled with His Spirit.

I'm often asked, **"What do you do in your time of seeking His presence?"** I don't have a set formula. In my life, it varies from time to time, but the basic components are as follows:

First, I go into a private room, lock the door, and get on the floor before the Lord. It doesn't matter whether you sit or lie down. What's most important is the attitude of your heart.

Second, I repent of any sin in my life and I receive God's forgiveness.

Third, I worship the Lord in both my native language (English) and in the language of the Holy Spirit.

Fourth, I do the vital prayer of Romans 6:13 that has transformed my life: "...present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Fifth, I begin to recall experiences with the Lord (i.e., healings, miracles, provision) where He has manifested Himself in wonderful ways. This creates more of an expectancy and awareness of His Presence as I relive these times.

I tell the Lord: **"God, I want more of You, more of Your Presence, more of Your fullness in my life. Fill me with more of You."** I may repeat this statement many times as I wait on the Lord and focus on Him.

Then, I get quiet and that's when I begin to hear His voice. Many times, I begin to have visions and supernatural experiences. The key here is learning to wait in solitude. I cannot overemphasize the

importance of waiting on the Lord until I experience His manifest Presence daily. I don't come out of that private room until I have experienced His Presence.

During our soaking times, we position ourselves to receive impressions, nudges, quiet whispers, pictures, angelic visitations, and supernatural revelations. Here is a partial list of what to expect:

Dreams (Job 33:14-16, Gen. 28:10-16)
Visions (Dan 7:1-3,9, Acts 16:9-10)
Trances (Acts 10:9-17, 11:5)
Out of body experiences (2 Cor. 12:2-4)
Angelic visitations (Luke 1:57,11-17, Acts 12:7-10)
Being transported in the Spirit (Acts 8:39-40)

Experiencing the true intimate Presence of the living God will radically change your life. People describe His manifest Presence in different ways. To some, it is heat, electricity, or shaking. To others, it is lightness, peace, or weeping.

Experiencing the manifest presence is not the goal but the gateway to the supernatural realm. It's the beginning. We go into the spirit realm where we can see Him, hear His voice, walk with Him, and be empowered by Him.

Isaiah 64:4 says God "acts for the one who waits for Him." The Amplified version states, "God...who works and shows Himself active on behalf of him who earnestly waits for Him." He's waiting on us to wait on Him.

The Cumulative Effect

Sometimes we may feel our soaking time has been unproductive. We ask, "Is it worth it?" because we see no immediate change or benefit. I realized some time ago that there is a cumulative effect that takes place when I spend time in the manifest Presence of the Lord.

From this cumulative effect, God is making a deposit into my inner most being. As I begin to give out, that anointing flows out of the deposit He had been making all along.

We must learn to come quietly into His Presence just wanting more of Him in our lives. We need to "soak in His Presence," extracting more of His fullness into those places where we are barren. The cumulative effect of spending time with the Lord will produce an increased anointing in your life. The release of that anointing will serve as a springboard to a life of miracles.

The apostle John offers believers a mind-boggling statement in 1 John 4:17 (NASB) *"...as He is, so also are we in this world."*

The implication of this verse is clear-believers should be like Him. That is next to impossible without spending quality time in His manifest Presence. We will never even understand His compassionate nature for a lost and wounded humanity without regular, daily times with Him.

Conclusion

Intimacy with God is the simple means by which we access living in the miraculous. Spending time in His manifest Presence is the discipline we must develop to access all that God has for us. And, the cumulative effect is what happens in our anointing (or gifting) to function in healing or any of the supernatural.

God's timing has come for greater works to be accomplished among His people. Press in for more of God's Presence in your own life!

Gary Oates Ministries