

The Summer Ends, but His Presence Remains

Summer in the Psalms

Psalm 16:8–11

Ephesians 3:16–19

Seasons change, schedules become busy, and summer eventually ends, but the presence of God remains.

Introduction

It is hard to believe we are already approaching the end of summer.

The days are beginning to feel shorter. Vacations are ending, school supplies are filling the stores, and families are preparing to return to their regular routines.

At the beginning of summer, we were reminded that God's presence does not take a vacation. He is with us at the lake, around the campfire, on the road, and during the quiet moments when we finally slow down.

But as summer ends, we need to remember another truth:

The God who met us during the summer will go with us into the next season.

God is not only present during vacations, sunsets, and peaceful mornings. He is also present during alarm clocks, school schedules, demanding workdays, doctor appointments, and difficult conversations.

Psalm 16:11 says:

“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”

David does not say that joy is found in perfect circumstances. Joy is found in God's presence.

Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:19 that believers would:

“Be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

God does not want to occupy only the religious part of our lives. He wants to fill every part.

The question is not whether God will be present in the next season. The question is whether we will recognize Him.

1. Recognize God's Presence in the Ordinary

Psalm 16:8 says:

"I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

David says, **"I keep my eyes always on the Lord."**

That is an intentional decision.

Another translation says:

"I have set the Lord always before me."

God was already present, but David deliberately turned his attention toward Him.

That is what it means to practice the presence of God. We recognize that He is already with us and intentionally focus our attention upon Him.

God Is Already There

Sometimes we pray, "God, please show up."

We certainly desire those moments when God manifests His presence and His Spirit moves powerfully. But the truth is that God is already present.

The psalmist asked:

"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?"

Psalm 139:7

God was present when you woke up this morning.

He was present when you drove to work.

He was present at your dinner table.

He was present during the laughter, the silence, the celebration, and the struggle.

The problem is often not God's absence. The problem is our distraction.

We can easily divide life into two categories: sacred moments and ordinary moments.

We consider church sacred but the workplace ordinary. Prayer is sacred, but washing dishes is ordinary. Worship is sacred, but driving the children to school is ordinary.

However, Colossians 3:17 says:

“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

God wants to inhabit the “whatever.”

Whatever you do. Wherever you go. Whatever season you enter.

His presence can transform an ordinary moment into a sacred encounter.

Recognizing God Before the Moment Passes

At the end of summer, we often look through the pictures we took.

We see pictures from vacations, cookouts, church events, sunsets, and time with family. Looking back, we notice things we did not fully appreciate while they were happening.

We recognize how beautiful the sunset was. We see how quickly the children are growing. We remember someone's laughter. We realize that what felt ordinary was actually precious.

Sometimes we do the same thing spiritually. We look back and realize, “God was there.”

God does not want us to recognize His presence only in hindsight. He wants us to become aware of Him while the moment is happening.

Before your feet touch the floor each morning, pray:

“Lord, thank You for being with me today.”

Before entering your workplace, pray:

“Holy Spirit, lead me in this place.”

Before a difficult conversation, pray:

“Jesus, help me reflect Your character.”

Before going to sleep, ask:

“Lord, where did I see You today?”

These prayers do not have to be long. They simply turn our attention toward the One who is already present.

If we learn to recognize God in ordinary moments, no part of our lives will be spiritually empty.

2. Celebrate God’s Presence in Community

Psalm 16:3 says:

“I say of the holy people who are in the land, ‘They are the noble ones in whom is all my delight.’”

David’s relationship with God did not cause him to withdraw from God’s people. His love for God produced a love for the community of faith.

God’s presence is personal, but it is not meant to remain private.

God Reveals His Presence Through People

There are times when we feel God’s presence during prayer and worship. But there are also times when God makes His presence known through another person.

Sometimes His presence sounds like a friend saying:

“I was thinking about you today.”

Sometimes it looks like someone bringing a meal when a family is hurting.

Sometimes it is a church member placing a hand on your shoulder and praying.

Sometimes it is laughter around a table.

Sometimes it is someone sitting beside you in your pain without attempting to explain it.

Do not overlook God because He came to you through another person.

Jesus said in Matthew 18:20:

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Jesus is actively present among His people.

Church is more than people gathering in the same building. We are a body, a family, and a people among whom Christ has promised to work.

Summer may provide special opportunities for community, but we must not allow fellowship to end when summer does.

We still need one another when school begins, work becomes demanding, and life becomes difficult.

We Understand God’s Love Together

Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:17–19:

“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.”

Notice the words:

“Together with all the Lord’s holy people.”

There are dimensions of God’s love that we understand only through community.

I understand one aspect of His grace through my story. You understand another aspect through yours. When we come together, we see a fuller picture of God's faithfulness.

One person says, "God healed me."

Another says, "God sustained me while I waited for healing."

One says, "God opened the door."

Another says, "God gave me peace when the door remained closed."

Together, our stories reveal the fullness of God.

Don't Allow Busyness to Produce Isolation

A coal removed from a fire may remain hot for a while, but eventually it begins to cool. When it is placed back among the other coals, the heat returns.

That is why isolation is dangerous.

The enemy knows that when he separates us, discouragement becomes stronger, temptation becomes louder, and our spiritual fire weakens.

As summer ends:

- Stay connected to the church.
- Invite someone to share a meal.
- Check on the person God places on your heart.
- Pray with your family.
- Find a place to serve.
- Refuse to carry your burdens alone.

When you come to church, do not only ask, "What can I receive?"

Also ask:

"Holy Spirit, whom can I strengthen?"

You may become the means through which someone else experiences God's presence.

God's presence is not only something we receive; it is something we carry into the lives of others.

3. Rest in God's Presence Through Every Season

Psalm 16:8–9 says:

“Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure.”

David's security was not found in the absence of trouble. It was found in the nearness of God.

He did not say that nothing around him would shake.

Circumstances may shake. Relationships, finances, health, and plans may shake.

But David declared:

“I will not be shaken because God is with me.”

The presence of God does not mean that every season will be easy. It means we will not enter any season alone.

Rest Is More Than an Empty Calendar

When we think about rest, we often imagine a vacation or an unscheduled afternoon. Those things are good, but it is possible to have an empty calendar and still possess an anxious soul.

You can sit beside the ocean while your mind continues racing. You can lie in bed while your thoughts remain at work.

Jesus offers deeper rest:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”
Matthew 11:28

Jesus offers rest for our souls.

Soul rest comes when we stop trying to carry responsibilities that belong to God.

Many of us are exhausted because we have accepted responsibility for outcomes that belong to Him.

We are responsible for obedience. God is responsible for the outcome.

We are responsible for prayer. God is responsible for the answer.

We are responsible for faithfulness. God is responsible for the harvest.

We are responsible for taking the next step. God is responsible for revealing the path.

Psalm 16:11 says:

“You make known to me the path of life.”

David trusted God to reveal the path. He did not have to know every turn before taking the next step.

Stop Reaching for the Wheel

Some people cannot rest when someone else is driving. They sit in the passenger seat watching every turn, pressing an imaginary brake, and warning the driver.

They are not behind the wheel, but internally, they are still attempting to control the vehicle.

That is how we sometimes approach God.

We say, “Lord, You are in control,” but we keep reaching for the wheel. We tell Him how quickly to move and which road to take.

Rest begins when we trust the One who sees the entire road.

You may not know what the next season holds, but you know who is leading you through it.

Ephesians 3:19 speaks of being filled with all the fullness of God.

God desires to fill the places we have kept closed.

His peace fills our anxiety.

His strength fills our weakness.

His wisdom fills our confusion.

His love fills our wounded places.

His Spirit fills our ordinary lives.

God does not want to be an occasional visitor. He desires to fill the entire house.

His presence does not remove every burden, but it reminds us that we never carry one alone.

Conclusion: Carry His Presence Forward

Psalms 16:11 says:

“You make known to me the path of life.”

A path means movement.

God’s presence is not merely a place where we sit. It is a presence we carry as we walk.

Moses told the Lord:

“If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.”

Exodus 33:15

Moses understood that even the Promised Land would be empty without God’s presence.

As summer ends, we will pack certain things away. Vacation bags will return to the closet. Camping equipment will be stored. Schedules will change.

But do not pack away your awareness of God.

Do not leave Him in your summer memories.

Recognize His presence in the classroom, the workplace, the doctor’s office, the family meeting, and the difficult season.

Psalm 23 does not say the Shepherd meets us only beside still waters. He is also with us in the valley.

The location changes, but the Shepherd remains.

Your schedule may change, but His availability will not.

Your circumstances may change, but His character will not.

Your emotions may change, but His promises will not.

The summer ends, but His presence remains.

Altar Call

Some of you are entering an uncertain season.

You may be facing a new school year, a medical battle, a family transition, or a financial challenge. You have been attempting to carry everything alone.

Today, the invitation is not simply to ask God to change your circumstances. It is to welcome His presence into them.

David declared:

“Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.”

Today, we can pray:

“Lord, I do not want another busy season without You. I do not want activity without intimacy. I do not merely want Your gifts. I want Your presence.”

If you do not have a personal relationship with Jesus, you can know Him today.

Jesus carried our sins to the cross, died in our place, and rose again. He offers forgiveness and eternal life to everyone who repents and believes.

Today, you can be reconciled to God and begin living in His presence.