

In Your Presence

Valerie Hamilton

The hunger of every human heart is to be happy. We want joy. We want goodness and pleasures to satisfy our weary hearts. When many think about God, they can believe that God does not care about their happiness and only cares about their holiness. But those two desires do not have to be at odds with one another. “In Your Presence” teaches us with rich, deep theological truths that it is in the presence of God—the holiest of all places—that we will be filled most fully with joy and freedom. This is where we get what our hearts are truly after.

The Spirit lets us see God and become more like Him.

For those who are apart from God, a veil remains over their hearts, preventing them from seeing the glory of God and keeping them from true joy and happiness. But when one turns to the Lord and comes into His presence, the Spirit frees us from the veil and allows us to see God for who He really is (2 Corinthians 3:14-18). This is manifested in the lyrics *“Come Holy Spirit move in power / Come lift our eyes to meet Your gaze ...”* As we all behold the glory of the Lord, we are being transformed into the same image.

The Spirit of the Lord brings freedom.

When we look for joy outside of God, we find ourselves serving other masters for a reward they can never provide us. We subject ourselves to slavery again in the hope that, somewhere along the way, we will eventually find the happiness we are after. But we know that if that happiness ever comes, it will never stay. It is only because of the final and enduring work of Christ that the Spirit of the Lord extends us true freedom. God wants our freedom to be sure and steady even more than we do. That is why He sent Jesus on our behalf: “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1).

There is no better place to be than with Him.

Understanding that God alone is the source of all joy and pleasure means that being with Him is where we will feel the most alive and most fully ourselves. Scripture tells us that in His presence we find fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16). He is the one who awakens our hearts to experience the love and joy that can come only from Him, the one who made and sustains us until we are with Him in eternity. The line *“You’re the one breathing heaven in this place”* illustrates that His presence is as close to heaven as we will come, until we are reunited there with Him when He calls us home.