

Notes from “The Practice of the Presence of God” by Bro. Lawrence (1608-1691)

. . . That we should settle ourselves firmly in God’s presence by constantly talking to Him, and that we should be ashamed when we let thoughts of trivial and silly things break into this conversation.

. . . That we should feed our souls by thinking of God, and that this devotion to God would give us great joy.

. . . That we ought to surrender ourselves to God both in worldly, temporal things and in spiritual matter, seeking our happiness only in His will, *regardless of whether He leads us through suffering or comfort, for both are the same to the soul that is truly committed to His will.*

. . . He prayed for sinners because he knew God would take care of their wickedness whenever He pleased, *and so he didn’t let himself worry about it.*

. . . Whenever he had a chance to practice some good quality, he would say to God, *“Lord I can’t do this unless you help me, and then he was given more than enough strength.”*

. . . When he failed or stumbled—he simply confessed his fault, saying to God, “I will always fail if you leave me on my own; it is up to you to keep me from falling and heal whatever is wrong with me.”

. . . That useless thoughts spoil everything. Our spiritual troubles begin with too much thinking; we ought to reject any thought we have as soon as we see that it has nothing to do with either what we are doing at the time or with our salvation. Then we can return to our communion with God.”

. . . Our only concern should be to love Him with all our hearts. Our only business should be to love and delight ourselves in God.

. . . a habitual, silent, and secret conversation between the soul and God, which often gives me so much happiness and joy on the inside, and sometimes on the outside, that I have to control myself so I won’t look silly to others.

. . . That he expected to soon experience some great pain of body or spirit, or even worst of all: that he would lose the sense of God’s presence. God’s goodness assured him, though, that he would not forsake him completely, and he would give him enough strength to endure whatever evil He allowed in his life. Therefore, he feared nothing and had no need to ask anyone about his spiritual condition. When he did try to consult with someone on spiritual matters, he had always come away more confused than before. Since he knew he was ready to lay down his life for the love of God, he had no fear of danger. When we abandon ourselves completely to God, we have found the path to heaven, and we will always have enough light to see the way we should act.