His *Presence* Over His *Presents*

Seeking His Face, Not Just His Hand

WHEN OUR RELATIONSHIP BECOMES A TRANSACTION

Church, we can become so interested in the **benefits** of knowing God that we neglect a **relationship** with God. A transaction is an exchange — I give you something because I expect something in return, and when the exchange is complete, the transaction is over. There is nothing wrong with asking God for something; He invites us to pray and bring our burdens before Him. The danger comes when the *only* time we seek God is when we want something *from* God.

> *"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple."*
>
> **PSALM 27:4 • DAVID'S ONE THING**

1 A Transactional Relationship Produces Conditional Commitment

As long as prayers are answered, we're faithful. As long as doors are opening, we're excited. As long as blessings are flowing, we're praising. But what happens when God doesn't give us what we requested — when the door stays closed, when sickness doesn't immediately go away, when the finances don't change? Real intimacy says: *Lord, even when I don't understand what You're doing, I still trust who You are.*

> **Job 13:15** — "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him..." Job suffered devastating loss, and still determined to trust God.

2 A Transactional Relationship Creates Spiritual Disappointment

When we approach God as though He is obligated to give us everything we request, unanswered prayer can make us question His goodness: "Lord, I've been faithful, giving, serving, praying — why haven't You done what I asked?" Without realizing it, we treat obedience like a payment and blessings like something God owes us. God's goodness is not measured by how often He gives us what we want.

> **2 Corinthians 12:7-10** — Paul pleaded for his thorn to depart and heard: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." A transactional faith asks, *"Why didn't God give me what I wanted?"* A relational faith asks, *"What is God teaching me about trusting Him through this?"*

3 A Transactional Relationship Weakens Spiritual Maturity

We become more concerned about **receiving** than **becoming**. We want deliverance but not development; comfort but not correction; promises but not obedience — God to change our circumstances without changing our character. You can leave a hard season with more money and the same attitude, a new opportunity and the same immaturity. But when you walk with God, He develops patience, humility, forgiveness, love, and perseverance.

> **Romans 8:29** — God's purpose includes conforming us to the image of His Son. The closer we walk with God, the more our lives should reflect the character of Christ.

4 A Transactional Relationship Turns Worship Into a Negotiation

Sometimes we approach God as though we're making a deal: "Lord, if You do this, I'll start coming to worship. If You bless me with that job, I'll become faithful." But genuine worship is not a bargaining tool. We don't worship to manipulate God's response — we worship because He is worthy. We don't obey to purchase His favor — we obey because He is Lord. David didn't just want what God could do; he wanted "to behold the beauty of the LORD." He wanted to behold the beauty of the One who blesses.

> **Remember:** Worship is not a negotiation. It is a response to who God is.

5 A Transactional Relationship Causes Us to Miss the Greatest Blessing

We celebrate the provision but neglect the Provider; the deliverance but neglect the Deliverer; the answered prayer but neglect the One who heard us. We become so busy looking for God's hand that we forget to seek His face. David said, "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after." God Himself was the treasure.

> **Psalm 27:8** — "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek."

Transactional vs. Relational — At a Glance

TRANSACTIONAL	RELATIONAL
Seeks God mainly in a crisis	Seeks God daily, in every season
Faithful while blessings flow	Trusts God even when He says "wait" or "no"
Worships to get something	Worships because He is worthy
Wants God's hand — what He gives	Seeks God's face — who He is
Asks God to change circumstances	Lets God change character

Take It Home — Reflect This Week

1. When was the last time I sought God just to be with Him — not to ask for anything?

2. Is my commitment conditional on answered prayer, or rooted in who God is?

3. What is God developing in my character in this season that a quick breakthrough would bypass?

A PRAYER TO PRAY

Lord, forgive me for the times I've wanted Your blessings more than I've wanted You. Teach me to trust You when I don't understand, to worship You because You are worthy, and to make Your presence — not just Your provision — my one thing. Thy face, Lord, will I seek. Amen.

God Himself is the treasure.

We pray when we need a blessing. We worship when we need a breakthrough.
Let us also stay — faithful, present, and close — after the breakthrough comes.