

CITYWEST CHURCH

VISION SUNDAY 2026

PRESENCE PEOPLE

My working definition of Vision is still this for believers, and that is finding yourself in God's story.

We have things to do, more specifically, God has things for us to do, and they are individual in that we are called to do them, but also as part of the body of Christ.

"God is looking for people through whom He can do the impossible — what a pity we plan only the things we can do by ourselves."

AW Tozer.

We have journeyed as a church through the last 5 years with themes that have not just stood alone but have joined together to lay a foundation for our future as a church.

Our best days as a church are not behind us, but in front of us in Jesus' name.

Our themes to now have been Unity, ancient path, hospitality, here I am send me, and this year Stef and I feel led for us as a church to live as presence people.

In our world that is ever changing and clarity and truth seem to be hard to define, we believe that believers we need to live as presence people.

Not so that we can combat the world, but so that we can see the good and God things in our world, aware that he has not abandoned us, but he is with us and closer than people think.

Paul on Mars Hill speaking to those with knowledge of spiritual things but no knowledge of God, helping them know who the "unknown" God is.

He says this to them in the midst of his speech.

*"His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. **28** For in him we live and move and exist.*

Acts 17:27-28a (NLT)

He is not far from any of us.

In him we live and move and have our being.

We live in a modern world that is looking and reaching out for love, meaning, and identity, and many things have come along and filled that void for people. The search for the thing that is missing in us all is God.

St. Augustine puts it like this:

“You have made us for yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”

The challenge for us who are believers is not to be aware that he is not far, but to live as if he is present in every circumstance of our lives.

The pilgrimage of the Christian faith is not of finding God, but walking with him on the journey of life.

God is not far; he is closer, closer than so many of us, including me, realise.

A short teaching on the presence of God:

1. IT'S A BIG DEAL.

For believers and Pentecostals, God's presence is a big deal and an important focus for us. With that said, we must have a complete picture of God's presence to avoid hyping up moments instead of allowing God's presence to do what only it can do.

2. GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

This means that God is everywhere, all the time. Psalm 139 is a great reference for the omnipresence of God.

I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! **8** If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave,^[a] you are there. **9** If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, **10** even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. **11** I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night **12** but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you.

Psalm 139:7-12 (NLT)

This matters because wherever you go in your week, God is there. At school, work, uni, shopping, or at your sports club.

God is there in all those places and everywhere else, all at the same time.

This can be hard for our minds to fathom, but it brings comfort to our souls to know God is everywhere I go.

3. GOD'S MANIFEST OR OBVIOUS PRESENCE.

There are times when God makes his presence obvious. If we are honest, many of us would first think of God's obvious presence in a church gathering, which is right. Acts 2 details the obvious presence of God as the church gathered in the upper room.

On the day of Pentecost, all the believers were meeting together in one place. **2** Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. **3** Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. **4** And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

Acts 2:1-4 (NLT)

But because God is everywhere, we shouldn't limit God's obvious presence to just a church gathering.

Think of the Christmas story when the shepherds in the field saw the sky full of angels worshipping. They experienced the obvious presence of God, and guess where they were, at work.

4. PERSONAL FELT PRESENCE

In Genesis 28, Jacob has a dream, and God speaks to him about his future.

Vers 15 says:

What's more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go. One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you."

Genesis 28:15 (NLT)

Jacob had the personal guarantee of the presence of God protecting and being with him.

For us today, we have the Holy Spirit, another of the same kind as Jesus, to lead and guide us, and He acts as a down payment on our eternity.

When we read the written word of God, and we ask the Holy Spirit to make it the living word of God, we don't just have a feeling but a promise of his presence.

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1. How does believing God is already present in your workplace, home, or study change the way you approach your day?**
- 2. What might it look like to expect God's presence in the "unremarkable" moments of your week?**
- 3. What simple habits or rhythms could help you notice God's presence more consistently?**