



5 DAY DEVOTIONAL

Sermon: Presence Over Presents

SPEAKER: REV. CHRIS SMITH | 12/14/2025 | PAGE 1 OF 5

Day 1: The Most Important Question

Devotional: Have you ever stopped to consider where you'll spend eternity? In our fast-paced world, we're constantly planning our next vacation, career move, or weekend activity, but rarely do we pause to think about our eternal destination. David understood something profound when he penned Psalm 15 - that dwelling in God's presence isn't just a future hope, but the very thing that makes life worth living right now. When life feels overwhelming, when circumstances shift like sand beneath our feet, when we're worried about our loved ones or uncertain about tomorrow, it's God's presence that provides the anchor our souls desperately need. David wasn't writing from a place of ease; he was a man who faced giants, fled from enemies, and experienced the full spectrum of human emotion. Yet through it all, he discovered that God's presence was his greatest treasure. The question isn't whether we're good enough to earn God's presence - none of us are. The question is whether we recognize our deep need for Him and are willing to pursue a relationship that transforms how we live. God's presence doesn't just change our eternal destination; it changes our daily experience, bringing stability to chaos and hope to despair.

Bible Verse: 'Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?' - Psalm 15:1

Reflection Question: When you think about your daily priorities and the things that occupy your thoughts, how much time do you spend considering your relationship with God and your eternal destination?

Quote: Sometimes the most important question that we need to answer during our lifetime is where are we going to spend eternity? Is not something that too many people think about.

Prayer: Lord, help me to see beyond the temporary concerns of this world and recognize that dwelling in Your presence is what my heart truly longs for. Open my eyes to the eternal perspective and draw me closer to You each day.



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Day 2: The Mirror of Self-Examination

Devotional: It's human nature to notice the speck in someone else's eye while missing the log in our own. We can quickly identify our coworker's attitude problem, our neighbor's poor choices, or our family member's character flaws. But when was the last time you took an honest look at yourself? David understood that dwelling in God's presence requires walking uprightly, which begins with honest self-examination. This isn't about becoming consumed with guilt or shame, but about having the courage to see ourselves as God sees us. It's about being willing to ask the hard questions: Where am I falling short? What areas of my life need God's transforming touch? The beautiful truth is that God already knows our hearts completely, yet He invites us into His presence anyway. When we examine ourselves honestly and confess our shortcomings, we're not informing God of something He didn't know - we're positioning ourselves to receive His grace and transformation. This kind of vulnerability with God creates intimacy and opens the door for real change. Self-examination isn't meant to discourage us but to remind us of our constant need for God's grace and to keep us humble before Him and others.

Bible Verse: 'A person ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.' - 1 Corinthians 11:28

Reflection Question: What would change in your relationships and spiritual growth if you spent as much time examining your own heart as you do noticing the faults of others?

Quote: It's so easy to look at the person next to us. It's certainly easy to look at our neighbor. It's certainly easier to look at our co worker and pick out their faults and overlook our Own.

Prayer: Father, give me the courage to look honestly at my own heart and life. Help me to see where I need Your grace and transformation, and keep me from the trap of judging others while ignoring my own need for growth.



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Day 3: Integrity When No One's Watching

Devotional: Character is who you are when no one is watching. It's easy to do the right thing when others are looking, when there's accountability, or when there are consequences for wrong choices. But what about those moments when you could cut corners, bend the truth, or compromise your values without anyone knowing? Righteous work isn't about performing for an audience - it's about consistently doing what's right because it's right, regardless of who's watching. It's returning the extra change when the cashier makes a mistake. It's being honest on your taxes even when you could probably get away with fudging the numbers. It's treating people with respect even when they can't do anything for you. The truth is, Someone is always watching. Jesus is standing right beside you in every decision, every conversation, every moment of temptation. Would your choices change if you could physically see Him there? The reality is that He is there, and living with this awareness transforms how we approach every aspect of our lives. Integrity isn't about perfection; it's about consistency. It's about aligning our private actions with our public faith, knowing that God sees and values our heart's desire to honor Him in all things.

Bible Verse: 'Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.' - Psalm 139:23

Reflection Question: If Jesus were visibly standing next to you throughout your day, what specific behaviors or attitudes would you change?

Quote: Would you act and talk the same way if you could see Jesus standing by you?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to live with the constant awareness of Your presence. Give me the strength to do what's right even when no one else is watching, and let my integrity be a reflection of my love for You.



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Day 4: Words That Build or Destroy

Devotional: Your words have incredible power. They can build someone up or tear them down, bring healing or cause wounds, create unity or sow division. Every day, you have a choice about how you'll use this powerful tool that God has given you. It's sobering to realize that our words reveal what's truly in our hearts. When we're quick to gossip, complain, or criticize, we're showing that our hearts are focused on the negative rather than on God's goodness. But when our words encourage, build up, and speak truth in love, we reflect the heart of Christ. Think about it this way: you have a limited number of breaths in this life. Each word you speak uses up one of those precious breaths. Do you want to waste them on complaints, gossip, and negativity? Or do you want to invest them in words that matter - words that encourage others, speak truth, and point people toward God's goodness? The challenge isn't to become perfect in our speech overnight, but to become more intentional. Before speaking, we can ask ourselves: Will these words build up or tear down? Will they bring life or death? Will they reflect the love of Christ or the brokenness of this world?

Bible Verse: 'Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.' - Ephesians 4:29

Reflection Question: If someone listened to your conversations for a week, what would they conclude about what's most important to your heart?

Quote: The way I see it, we've only got a certain amount of breaths in this world, right? They're numbered. My days are numbered. And I don't want to waste my breath being a complainer.

Prayer: God, help me to use my words wisely. Fill my heart with Your love and goodness so that what flows from my mouth brings life and encouragement to others. Guard my tongue from gossip and complaints.



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Day 5: Grace for the Journey

Devotional: After four days of examining what it means to dwell in God's presence - walking uprightly, working righteously, speaking truthfully, and maintaining integrity - you might feel overwhelmed. The standard seems impossibly high. And you're right - it is. Only Jesus perfectly fulfilled every requirement of Psalm 15. But here's the beautiful truth: there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. God doesn't expect you to achieve perfection on your own. He knows you'll fall short, make mistakes, and need His grace daily. That's exactly why He sent Jesus - not just to save you from eternal separation, but to walk with you every day as you grow in righteousness. You need Jesus' help to live out these principles. You need the power of His Spirit to transform your heart. You need the guidance of God's Word to show you the way. The goal isn't perfection but progress - a heart that genuinely seeks to please God and values His presence above temporary earthly gains. When you fail (and you will), confess it, receive His forgiveness, and keep moving forward. God's grace is sufficient for every shortcoming, and His love never wavers based on your performance. He's more interested in the direction of your heart than the perfection of your actions.

Bible Verse: 'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.' - Romans 8:1

Reflection Question: How does knowing that God's love for you isn't based on your perfect performance change the way you approach spiritual growth and daily obedience?

Quote: We need his help for us to live out Psalms 15. We need his power of His Spirit to live out Psalms 15. We need the guidance of God's Word to live out Psalms 15 because we want to dwell in the presence of an almighty God.

Prayer: Thank You, Jesus, for Your perfect life that covers my imperfections. Help me to rest in Your grace while still pursuing growth in righteousness. Give me Your Spirit's power to live in a way that honors You and draws me closer to Your presence.



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