



## The Practice of the Presence of God (Annotated)

*Brother Lawrence*

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The Practice of the Presence of God is a book of collected teachings of Brother Lawrence, a 17th-century Carmelite monk. Compiled by Father Joseph de Beaufort. The compilation includes letters, as well as records of his conversations kept by Brother Lawrence's interlocutors. The basic theme of the book is the development of an awareness of the presence of God.

This classic has been translated and published many times since Nicholas Herman, known as Brother Lawrence, first penned his letters and conversations in the 17th century. His view of "practicing the presence of God" could be summed up with his statement: "The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer, and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the blessed sacrament."

The simplicity, yet the profoundness of being so aware of God, His love and His delight, is antithetical to the busyness of ministry and the need to perform well for God and people. Brother Lawrence's advice was "that the most excellent method he had found of going to God was that of doing our common business without any view of pleasing men, and (as far as we are capable) purely for the love of God."

The compilation of his reflections and advice should be read periodically to remind us of the spiritual discipline of "practicing the presence of God" in our daily lives.



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