



**[REALITY.01:  
IN THE ROOM  
WITH YOU]**

*YOU BOTH PRECEDE  
AND FOLLOW ME.  
YOU PLACE YOUR  
HAND OF BLESSING  
ON MY HEAD (PSALM  
139:5 NLT).*

*We see the people and the events of our lives as we walk through every day. But there's more going on in and among what we see. Here are the first five realities of your world that God wants you to know.*

REALITY #1: RIGHT NOW—IN THIS VERY MOMENT—AS YOU READ THESE WORDS, YOU ARE NOT ALONE. SOMEONE CAN HEAR EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE. SOMEONE SEES YOUR EVERY THOUGHT. SOMEONE CAN FEEL YOUR EVERY HEARTBEAT. AND THAT SOMEONE IS GOD. HE IS INTENSELY CLOSE—RIGHT NOW. IF YOU COULD SEE HOW CLOSE HE IS, IT WOULD BLOW YOUR MIND.

**[READ]** The world and everything in it is dripping with the presence of God. All of creation is blanketed and covered by Him. To God, there are no shadows, no hiding places. He sees everything—nothing escapes His notice. Although you can't see Him, He sees you. He is everywhere. He is here. He is with you, right now.

*I can never escape from your spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me (Psalm 139:7-10 NLT).*

Everywhere you go, God is with you.

**[THINK]** So what does the reality that God is everywhere mean? Right now God is fully present in heaven where angels are gathering in worship around His throne proclaiming His greatness. Right now He is also fully present with you as you read these words. He sees the big picture, but He also sees every single brushstroke and every speck of color in that picture. He sees what's happening right now, but He also sees what will happen tomorrow and a hundred years from now. He sees the galaxies we've yet to discover, but He also sees every hair on your head.

God is always with you. The reality is that you will never enter into a situation, have a conversation, or have an experience where God isn't right in the middle of the situation or experience with you. He is in the car when you're driving. In fact, while He is with you in the car, He is already where you are headed. God is always right there with you—completely hemming you in (Psalm 139:5).

Not only is God everywhere, He also knows everything. That means He is fully aware of what you're looking at right now. He is fully aware of what you're thinking. He is fully aware of what you're going to do next. Because God knows everything and is always with you, experiencing everything that you experience, your relationship with Him can be incredibly intimate.

**[LIVE]** God tells us that He is everywhere because He wants us to look for Him. He wants us to open our eyes and look past the ordinary and obvious. Sometimes God's presence is so evident—like when someone says just the thing you needed to hear when you needed to hear it. But it's also easy to overlook God—to miss what is so near to you right now.

Make it a point to keep yourself aware of God's constant, intimate presence with you—while you're in class . . . while you're driving . . . while you're listening to music . . . while you're falling asleep. Get in the habit of turning your thoughts to the reality that God is with you. Acknowledge His presence. Enter the reality of a world where nothing escapes God's notice and nothing is too small to capture His attention.

God is massively big, but He is also tenderly intimate. He is a beautiful paradox.

**[NXT LVL]** For the next five days, acknowledge God's presence by talking to Him. Have an ongoing conversation with Him throughout the day. Talk to God as if He is always with you because He always is.

# [ REALITY .02: WARRIORS ]

Reality #2: God is with you right now, but He is not alone. And He might not be the only spiritual being with you. Scripture teaches that angels are real.

**[READ]** Even though we can't see them, angels are very much a part of the landscape of our world. And they're not cute, chubby babies with wings, either. They're more like God's spiritual version of the Navy SEALs. They're super, super powerful. Almost every time people actually see an angel, their knee-jerk reaction is to fall on their face in fear (Judges 6:22, Daniel 10:4-9; Luke 1:11-13, Luke 2:9-10). Second Kings 19:35 tells us that one angel, just one angel, wiped out 185,000 of God's enemies in one night. Angels serve God and carry out His plans. They obey God as their Commander, fighting to advance His Kingdom and fighting to protect His people.

Some are messengers, like Gabriel, who told Mary that she was going to have Jesus. Many spend their time worshiping God (Revelation 5:11-12). All of them serve God: *Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding (Psalm 103:20).*

And there are a lot of them. Revelation 5:11 says that they number thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. Ten thousand times ten thousand angelic Navy SEALs on the side of the Lord. Oh, the realities that we can't see.

**[THINK]** And this is even more overwhelming: these amazing God-warriors protect us. *He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone (Psalm 91:11-12).* God's army of angels act as ambassadors for each of us. *Are not all angels ministering spirits*

*sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14).*

Not only that, but God sends out angels in response to our prayers, and they will fight demonic beings to make sure we receive God's answer. While in captivity in Babylon, Daniel was fasting and praying for 21 days, asking God to explain an awful vision he had. Twenty-one days later an angel came to him and said: *"Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia. Now I am here to explain what will happen to your people in the future" (Daniel 10:12-14 NLT).*

**[LIVE]** So how are we supposed to interact with angels? Can we ask for their help? It seems like there's no harm in asking God to send out His angels to help us or to help people. God is their Commander—in fact, one of His names, Jehovah Sabaoth, which is phrased as "God Almighty" or "Lord of Hosts" in our Bibles means "God of the angel armies." Since God is their Commander, we can ask Him to send angels to guard, protect, and defend His people.

Even though we don't understand a lot about how angels interact with us, be aware that they're real and they're here. As members of God's Kingdom, we have angels on our side.

**[NXT LVL]** Jesus' words in Matthew 18:10 seem to imply that angels are assigned to people—at least to children.

# [ REALITY .03: DESTROYER ]

Reality #3: Even though we can't see him, there's another being who is part of the landscape of our life—Satan. He is pure evil and hatred. He wants to remain unseen and undetected . . . but the fight he leads is very real. He is out to destroy us.

**[READ]** God gives us bits and pieces of Satan's story in His Word. Satan was once an angel, which means he is a created being—and therefore is limited, unlike God. While he once lived in heaven, he was later cast out from heaven. Jesus described it this way: *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18).*

No matter how the heavenly scene went down, Satan was in the garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. His temptation and his slander of God's character led to the fall of the world. And that's what Satan does—if something is good, he sets out to destroy it.

**[MORE]** Satan is a liar. He is a manipulator of the truth, full of hatred and guile. Jesus called him a murderer and the father of lies: *"He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).*

Satan accuses us before God day and night (Revelation 12:10). He is deceptive and can make himself look beautiful (2 Corinthians 11:14). He holds the power of death (Hebrews 2:14), and he makes bad things happen in our lives (Revelation 2:10). He is our enemy and is out to kill us. *Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).*

**[THINK]** The world is under the authority of Satan. Yes, God is on His throne and is in complete control, but apparently, in the garden when Adam and Eve chose to believe the serpent and disbelieve God, they submitted themselves to the serpent's authority—and the whole world too, since God had put it under their authority. Second Corinthians 4:4 calls him *the god of this age*. Ephesians 2:2 calls him *Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air*. *He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God (NLT).*

**[LIVE]** Satan is real. He hates God. And he hates you. There is a being in your life whose main mission is to try to steer you away from God. He wants you to doubt God's love and to doubt who you are as God's child and as a citizen of His Kingdom.

Satan fights dirty. His most powerful tactics are to wage a battle in your mind and heart. And as a spiritual being, he can speak to our spirits and attack us from within. Satan can forcefully steal truth from you if you don't defend yourself: *"The ones along the path are those who have the Word sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, Satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them" (Mark 4:15 AMP).*

Satan has the ability to shoot flaming arrows of lies into your heart and mind, trying to mentally, spiritually, and physically destroy you (Ephesians 6:16). That means the thoughts that you have aren't always from you. He wants you to believe lies because he knows that Truth is the weapon that can ultimately defeat him.

Be aware of Satan. He is a major player in your life—even if you can't see him.

**[NXT LVL]** Satan isn't equal to God. Revelation 20:1-3 tells us that when Satan is finally defeated, it will take only one of God's angels to imprison him.

# [REALITY.04: FALLEN ANGELS]

Reality #4: Satan isn't the only evil being that is out to destroy you. God has told us that other angels fell when Satan did and are part of his team of darkness. Demons are real. And they're out to kill you too.

**[READ]** Although the passages are cryptic, most Bible scholars assume that when Satan rebelled in heaven, a large number of angels followed him and were cast out of heaven when he was. *The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him (Revelation 12:9).*

How many angels? Based on the theory that stars are symbolic for angels, some scholars theorize that a third of them followed Satan because of this passage: *Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth (Revelation 12:3-4).*

We don't know exactly how many angels decided to follow Satan, but we know many did. And we know they're on earth following him because Jesus had several run-ins with them during His time on earth. *The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them" (Mark 5:12).*

**[THINK]** Since demons are fallen angels, they are powerful. And they're on the same mission that Satan is—to prevent people from seeing the goodness of God and to stop the spread of His Kingdom. Demons hate you and never have a shred of compassion or concern for you. They're constantly thinking of ways to harm you and ways to spiritually and mentally take you out—there's nothing merciful in them.

Fallen angels will try to create attitudes and environments that are dark and sinister. If you step into a place that feels dark, be aware. There might be more going on in the room than what you see. Like Satan, demons hurl lies at you like flaming arrows (Ephesians 6:16), hoping to steal your joy, put distance between you and God, and to make you feel less like the child of the King that you are.

**[LIVE]** What can you do to take a stand against a being as powerful as a fallen angel? Two things. One: You can vehemently and tenaciously cling to the truth. When you hear a lie in your head—which is a go-to move of the powers of darkness—refuse, absolutely refuse, to believe it. Reject the lie and replace it with the Truth from Scripture. And two: When being attacked by a demon, you can stand in the authority of Jesus and rebuke it. When a foul spirit is attacking you, command it to stop and leave in Jesus' name. Do like the archangel Michael did when he had a direct confrontation with Satan: *When he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, [he] did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 9).*

You cannot see them, but demons are real. Be aware.

**[NXT LVL]** Demons must be taken seriously because they're seriously out to get you. But while God wants us to be vigilant, He doesn't want us to fear demons. Only demons want you to fear because fear gives them more power in your life. Remember that the Spirit that dwells in you as a child of God is more powerful than all the demons and Satan combined (1 John 4:4). When you feel attacked, call on God's Spirit and His powerful angels to fight on your behalf and use the Truth of who God says you are in His Word as a sword in your defense.

# [REALITY.05: THE KINGDOM]

Reality #5: God is in the process of invading Satan's kingdom and reclaiming the world for His Kingdom.

**[READ]** Prior to Jesus' coming, God's dwelling place on earth had been limited to a tabernacle or temple that He had instructed His people to build. Heaven met earth in one finite spot—the Holy of Holies where God's presence hovered above the ark of the covenant. But when Jesus came to earth, that changed. He brought His Kingdom with Him. And it was His intention to spread it further. This time, there would be no limits, no boundaries to His presence. It was a full-out invasion.

*"The time has come," [Jesus] said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15).*

**[THINK]** As Jesus-followers, we often misinterpret what Jesus said. Jesus told us to repent because God's Kingdom had come (Matthew 4:17). But a lot of times we act as if Jesus said: "Repent! And you get to go to heaven!"

Jesus said that the Kingdom of heaven is near. It's near—it's here. And yes, since we've been bought by the blood of Jesus, we'll live forever with Him in heaven. One day God will usher in His Kingdom completely and we'll live forever with Him. It's our destiny. It's where we're headed. But our mission—what we are to do for the rest of our earthly lives—is to, through the power of the Holy Spirit, advance God's Kingdom here. Because His Kingdom is right here—right now.

*[When] asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, [Jesus]*

*replied to them by saying, "The kingdom of God does not come with signs to be observed or with visible display, nor will people say, 'Look! Here [it is]!' or, 'See, [it is] there!' For behold, the kingdom of God is within you [in your hearts] and among you [surrounding you]" (Luke 17:20-21 AMP).*

Jesus told us to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 4:17). That means we're to change the way we live because we're citizens of His Kingdom.

**[LIVE]** Even though you can't see it, God's Kingdom is within you in your heart, and among you, surrounding you. God's Kingdom is any place, any person, that's under the authority, reign, and dominion of the King. And while your eternal home is heaven, your mission is to live like the citizen of heaven you are, right here.

Even though you can't see it, anytime you live like the child of the King that you are, you make the world look more like God's Kingdom. Anytime you love like the child of the King that you are, you make the world look more like God's Kingdom. Anytime you're merciful, loving, just, courageous, honest, caring, kind—like your King—the world looks more like His Kingdom. Right here, right now.

**[NXT LVL]** It is our charge to usher in the Kingdom of God by the way we live and love. It's our biggest weapon in the battle to destroy Satan. Whenever we stand for Truth or demonstrate God's Truth by the way we live, we strike a blow against Satan and his fallen angels. Ask God to open your eyes to see glimpses of His Kingdom around you. Ask Him to open your spiritual eyes to opportunities to make your world look more like His Kingdom.