



Editor's Note: *Miriam Beacham, above right, Laura Christy, left, and Beth Greer, center, minister together through their music, speaking, and writing. The three have teamed up to write a wonderful devotional book that will be available by early 2009. To introduce these three very special ladies, and in anticipation of their new book, ROC is publishing an excerpt from each of them. We hope you will pick up the next two issues of ROC to read what God has placed on Beth and Laura's heart. To invite Miriam to sing or speak at your church or for your group, or to learn more about their ministry, visit www.onepurpose.com. One Purpose is a music and teaching ministry of Crossover Communications International.*

"You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasure of living with you forever."—Psalm 16:11 (NLT)

One evening my husband Jim and I were sitting at our kitchen table visiting with a friend when she said, "I'd rather have His presence before His provision." God used those eight words to speak truth to my heart that night. We were experiencing some really difficult days that month as we trusted the Lord in the area of provision. Wasn't it neat of God to use this "unplanned" visit from our friend to remind me that His presence in my life is more important than His provision?

I sometimes get so overwhelmed by what I don't have in the way of material things that I forget what I do have—my Heavenly Father's presence with me moment by moment. Don't get me wrong—I would love both at the same time; however, it is my desire that I would choose His presence first.

Interestingly enough, during this difficult time when we struggled more than ever before to make ends meet, I also felt God's presence more than ever before. Though I cried harder than I have cried in a long time over our financial situation, I also felt unspeakable joy which could only come from the presence of the Lord in my life. He spoke to my heart as I spent time in His Word. One morning as I read from Psalm 62, I was encouraged by these words in verses 7 and 8:

My victory and honor come from God alone. He is my refuge, a rock where no enemy can reach me. O my people trust in him at all times. Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge.

What a precious thought that I can pour out my heart to the Lord. He is my Refuge, my Rock—and He won't let me down. God not only let me experience His presence through His Word, but also through words of encouragement, notes, and gifts from family and friends. I experienced His presence through divine appointments—like the friend who shared that statement at our kitchen table, and the time we "bumped" into a friend when we stopped at the "wrong" gas station. That friend not only encouraged Jim in the Word, but also slipped him a monetary gift.

Most importantly, I have experienced God's presence as Jim and I have shared these difficult times with our children and reminded them of God's faithfulness to our family. We have been able to help them see God's goodness and faithfulness to our family through some awesome, teachable moments. We have prayed together as a family and have then seen God answer those prayers. Sometimes the answers are not what we had hoped, but they are answers nonetheless.

How about you? Would you rather experience His presence before His provision? Do you know what it means to truly know God as your Refuge and your Rock? In a world where much of life seems uncertain and shaky, I encourage you to put your trust in the Lord, who is our Rock and who can be trusted and counted on. Spend time in His Word daily so you can come to know Him as your Refuge, just as I have.

Born in the Midwest, Miriam moved to South Carolina at the age of eight. Shortly after graduating from the University of South Carolina, she married Jim Beacham. They have three children—Jimmy, Rachel, and Mark. Miriam and her husband are in full-time ministry with Crossover Communications International, a missions organization which seeks to glorify God and facilitate church planting movements among the peoples of Eurasia. Miriam also has a passion for being a compass to younger women by discipling and mentoring them.