

Bible Studies

Intimacy with God

Read Job 29v1-4

Job had many troubles, the lose of his children, his health and his worldly possessions. Yet of all these one of the thing that troubled him the most, and which he finds most inexplicable, was the loss of his relationship with God.

How does Job describe his relationship with God? v4

There was a time when God was his intimate friend, now, through no fault of his own, this relationship is gone. The heavens are brass. He describes his relationship with God in v3.

When his lamp shone upon my head and by his light I walked through darkness! Job 29v3

What was the light? What was the darkness?

For me, this presents a graphic picture of Job (and us), living in a world of darkness, sin, oppression and ignorance, and yet God's light shining on him. Everywhere he walks he walks in light.

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. Psalm 36v9

Intimacy with God was that light. But now the light has gone out and he is left in the darkness.



Intimacy with God needs to be the aim of our lives.

Humans are social creatures. Relationships are important. There are all kinds of relationships, good and bad. There are also all kinds of relationships with God.

What relationship with God is described in Ephesians 2v3?

Is this a good or bad relationship?

On the positive side, God describes His relationship with us in many ways, not all of them include intimacy.

What degree of intimacy do these relationships include?

- Master - servant** 
- Friend** 
- Father - Child** 
- Husband - wife** 

One of the reoccurring themes in the psalms is the search for intimacy with God.

When will you come to me? Psalm 101:2

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. Psalm 42:1

Other psalms celebrate this intimacy.



Read Psalm 84

Which verses in this psalm talk about searching for intimacy?

Which verses talk about finding it?

The psalmist tells us that the sparrow has found a place near the altar. In doing so, he is telling us that **there is a place of intimacy for us in God**. Just as the sparrow found a place so must we. The psalmist called this a pilgrimage, he had to keep searching, and so do we.

As humans we crave intimacy. It is one of the forces that drives our societies promiscuity and destructive relationships. Intimacy is something we are bad at. It requires a reciprocal giving which is very risky.

God put the desire for intimacy in us.



God wants intimacy with us

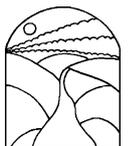
God walked with Adam in the cool of the day. He created us to be objects of His intimacy. He did not create us to be His servants, (He made Angels for that.) He created us for relationship with Him. God wants an intimate relationship with us. But it must be on His terms.



Read Hebrews 4v1-11

Do you think this rest speaks of intimacy?

How do we enter this rest?



Rest comes in surrendering to God, in acknowledging that we can never be good enough and relying on Jesus. It comes in forgiveness of sins, in trusting God. It is by faith. Rest is a relationship with God, a state of intimacy. It is facilitated by forgiveness of sin and is by grace. It cannot be earned.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.... Matthew 11:28
Can you hear Christ calling you to intimacy?

The story so far.



There is a place of intimacy with God – which we can find.
We have a need for that intimacy – it is satisfying.
God created us to be objects of His intimacy – He desires intimacy with us.



How am I going to find intimacy with God?

At this point it would be easy to come up with a list of do's and don'ts. But if the above is true, and intimacy with God is our natural condition, then we need to identify the things that block that intimacy. That stand in the way of what should be natural for us.

What things stand in the way of intimacy with God?

As has already been mentioned there are many kinds of relationships and not all of them include intimacy.

Would you expect to find intimacy in an employer, employee, relationship?

Would you expect to find intimacy in a teacher, student, relationship?

What kind of relationships do you find intimacy in?

Here is the big question, what do these relationships have in common?

So we are sitting here on the counselors couch, trying to figure out way we don't have an intimate relationship with God.

The first question has to be, what kind of a relationship do you have with God? A relationship with God can be based on many things; fear, guilt, duty, awe, etc. These are not going to generate intimacy.

What should our relationship with God be based on?

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.
Deuteronomy 6:5 & Matthew 22:37

To love, we can add things like; grace, faith and trust.

Intimacy come as a natural product of a good relationship with God.

Some people exercise a kind of *Christian Agnosticism*, they believe in God and go to church, but they do not believe that God cares for them. God is always aloof from them, He does not concern himself with their daily life.

Is this what God is like?

Is this kind of a view of God going to bring about intimacy with him?

What would need to change to enable the person to know God intimately?

A few pointers

- 1** One of the cornerstones of intimacy with God is worship.
- 2** You cannot develop intimacy with God during the ads on TV. Intimacy requires time. *Be still and know that I am God* Psalm 46:10
- 3** To the list presented earlier (love, trust, commitment) add communication
- 4** Intimacy requires a giving of yourself. Intimacy with a human relationship require reciprocal giving. We have to let down our walls and barriers and let people get close to us, we have to open ourselves up. This involves the risk of being hurt. For intimacy with God we must surrender our fears, doubts and pride and allow God to come close.

In the cross of Jesus, God made the first move, He took the risk. Now it is your turn.

Come near to God and he will come near to you. James 4:8

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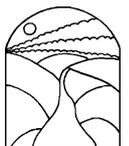
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What things stand in the way of intimacy with God?

Sin, unresponsiveness, Agnosticism (believing that god is far away from us) never thinking about God, never talking to God, being too busy for God

As has already been mentioned there are many kinds of relationships and not all of them include intimacy.

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Trust, love longevity, commitment, openness, desire, equality etc

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