

Personal Relationship with God

Through Daily Fellowship with Him 10-10-09

The closest personal relationships are with people who each day have meaningful two-way conversations. Jesus explained in John 15:5 how this works for our relationship with Him. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." To "remain" means to live with, actively, in the present tense. The miraculous truth is that, for Christians, our home with the Spirit of Christ goes with us wherever we go. And with His Word hidden in our heart, the two-way conversation can happen anytime.

There are many verses that explain God's desire for us to stay with Him in spiritual fellowship. One of them is 1 Thess. 5:16-18, "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." "Always," "continually," and "all" are words that leave no room for error. However, God knows we are not perfect, yet guides us in the best way to live.

Opposition to fellowship with God comes from our sinful nature, the devil and the fallen world. Therefore, we struggle to stay in daily personal relationship with God, but "if God is for us, who can be against us" (Romans 8:31). So, the struggle is well worth the effort. "Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Psalm 103:2). "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"-- but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

Deep felt emotional joy comes from a relationship with God, who loves you. "The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing" (Zephaniah 3:17). For other comforting verses read John 7:38-39 and Matthew 11:28-30.

Question: Would you like to grow deeper in your relationship with God? Why?

Commentary: Knowing God's will is both easy and difficult. The will of God is easy because we can read it in the Bible. The difficulty comes when applying His Word to a specific question where choices are not sins listed in the Bible. Decisions of this kind are determined through personal relationship with God. And if you feel like you are not obeying God, then it is sin because anything that is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). Godly counsel is important (Proverbs 15:22). Seeing how God is working around you can point to God's will (Acts 8:14). Additional verses that speak to God's will: Eph 1:18; 2:10; 6:18; Matt 5:16; Gal 6:10; Phil 1:9-10; 2:12-14; Psalm 119:105; 139:16.

Question: Does God help you with making decisions? How? Answer is in Ephesians 5:15-17; Romans 12:1-2 and Phil 4:4-7.

WE WERE CREATED TO HAVE RELATIONSHIPS

1 John 1:3 "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

Commentary: Fellowship means to share life together. Your normal desire which God put in you is to share life with Him and with others. The Fall of mankind caused a separation in your relationship with God, which as a result also caused a rift between your relationship with others. First thing to repair is the relationship with God by trusting in Jesus and remaining in Him. After this, relationships with people will improve and become what God intended.

Question: Do you see how an improved relationship with God would be the key to improving relationship with others. Answer is in 1 John 4:7-12.

Question: Are there relationships with people that you would like to improve?

APPROACH FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN A CONSISTENT MANNER

Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy is to "Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:7-8).

Commentary: Immediately after Pentecost, Peter preached the gospel to the crowd and 3,000 people met Jesus through faith and were baptized. (Acts 2:38-39). When we meet Jesus in a personal spiritual communication of faith we know it in our spirit. And we change because as God's children, godliness is now our goal. We begin a life-long purpose as followers of Jesus, knowing Him. Read **Matthew 7:21-23**.

Question: Does the Spirit of Christ witness in your spirit that you are a child of God? **Answer is in Romans 8:9+16 and Phil 1:19**

Question: Have you tried to read the Bible and pray every day in the past and not been able to keep it up? **Why?**

Question: Is your desire to have a personal relationship with God strong enough to fight for it? **Answer is in Phil 4:13 + 3:12-14.**
Additional verses: James 4:8, Gal. 6:9 & 2 Chronicles 7:14.

A STRUCTURED AND PLANNED DAILY DEVOTION

Isaiah 50:4-5 "The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back."

Commentary: Jesus gave us the example of daily communion with God and we are to follow. Show up each day to pray and read the Bible. Set a plan and fight against anything that gets in your way. Those are "fighten words" aren't they. Yes, they are. You will not succeed unless you fight for it. You can read through the Bible in one year if you set out to absolutely do it by His strength. "Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. (Isaiah 50:7).

Question: Are you prepared to give up whatever it takes in order have a daily personal relationship with God? **Answer is in Hebrews 12:1-3 and John 15:2.**

PRACTICAL METHODS AND STRUCTURE TO SUCCEED IN HOLINESS

SET AN APPOINTMENT WITH GOD EACH MORNING TO SPEND A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF TIME ALONE WITH HIM.

PRAY MORNING AND EVENING USING THE LORD'S PRAYER AS A PATTERN. Take each phrase and make it personal. "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread. ¹² Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (**Matthew 6:9-13**).

MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON HIS WORD. Take one or more verses per week, put them in your mind for memory and your heart for meditation. Meditation is fellowship with God, a personal relationship with the Word of God, Jesus Christ. "I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. ¹¹ I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (**Psalms 119:10-11**). Read Joshua 1:8.

SEEK TO STAY HOLY AND PURE FROM DEFILEMENT OF THE WORLD.

Ask God to show you where you are struggling and to forgive you as you repent of the sins you become aware of. You will always have sins to repent of. Stay humble before the Lord and He will protect you and show you His love. Read 1 Peter 1:13-16. Fleeing from temptation is spoken of in 1 Cor 6:18; 10:14; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22; and James 4:7.

STUDY AND READ THE BIBLE. -3 Methods

Use a Yearly Bible Reading Schedule which provides 15 minutes of reading each day for a blessing beyond what you can imagine. Read one chapter of Proverbs each day corresponding to the day of the month. Develop your own plan for reading, however if you have not read much of the Bible in the past, seek advice from your pastor.