

Casas Adobes Baptist Church
Sunday Morning, August 21, 2005
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spiritual growth Intimacy
SG Series #2
S-1682

John 15:15: Intimacy is someone who enters into our world and feels what we feel, and experiences what we experience, and knows us like we know ourselves.

Genesis 18:16-32: God's intimacy with Abraham
Genesis 5:22-24: God's intimacy with Enoch
Exodus 33:18-22: God's intimacy with Moses

GOD WANTS TO HAVE AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH US.

Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."
Proverbs 3:32: "For the LORD detests a perverse man but takes the upright into his confidence."
Psalm 139:3: "You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar (caringly involved) with all my ways."

What does it do to your heart to know that God is longing to have a personal, loving relationship with you?

Adam and Eve before the fall enjoyed comfortable intimacy with God and with each other (Genesis 2:25). They broke not only their relationship with God, but also God's heart when they entered the world of sin (Genesis 3:8-9). Do you hear the care, concern and disappointment in God's voice as He searched for the first pair hiding in the Garden?

God immediately initiated a plan to restore His relationship with mankind. He needed a cross to begin the process. He needs Christlikeness to complete the process.
John 17:3: "Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Unfortunately, most Christians do not define "eternal life" like Jesus did. Jesus described "eternal life" in terms of a deepening intimate relationship.

Our relationship with God matures as we close the gap in our spiritual journey.

In 1 John 2:12-14 we see not just a progression in spiritual growth; but also a progression in the depths of our intimacy with God.

Spiritual Children: Experience the beginning of a relationship of knowing God (acquaintance or casual friend).

Spiritual Young Men and Women: Experience the heart of God through the revealed life of Jesus Christ () as unveiled in the Bible (close friend).

Spiritual Mothers and Fathers: Experience the infinite depths of the Person of God Himself (intimate friend).

The whole idea behind this passage is that God wants to have a relationship with us.

I have a different message for Christians and for those who have yet to find Christ.

To Christians I say over and over again, “Grow up to be like Christ. Pray to be a spiritual mother or father at any price.”

To those yet to find Christ, I say again and again, “God wants to have an intimate relationship with you.”

I am saying the same thing to both groups. It just depends on where they are on the spiritual journey. The destination is the same: A deep intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

GOD HURTS FOR ME WHEN I HURT.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

“No one really knows me until they know me in my pain.”

Who knows you well enough to weep for you?

Who really cares about you when you hurt?

What if your relationship with God were so close that you sensed when He was crying for you in your hurts and pains? Who wouldn't want a relationship with God like that!

I HURT FOR GOD WHEN HE HURTS.

Matthew 5:4: Hurting people (even God!) need comfort.

We like it when God knows, understands and comforts our hearts. Did you ever stop to think that God might like it when we know, understand and comfort His heart? Is this not what friends are for?

Does God have feelings? Yes. He can certainly be grieved: Ephesians 4:30.

Genesis 6:6: The heart of God was grieved.

As our friendship with God deepens, we move into a level of friendship where we share God's emotions. We rejoice with Him when He rejoices. We hurt for Him when He hurts. Have you ever considered that God is both blessed and less alone when we minister to Him when He hurts? This is the “fellowship of sharing in His sufferings” in Philippians 3:10-11.

INTIMACY WITH GOD IS NOT ENOUGH. WE NEED OTHERS TO CLOSE THE GAP PROPERLY.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

No one goes on the spiritual journey alone.

Bible Fellowships are a great place to join in the spiritual journey with others.