

**RELATIONAL THEOLOGY SERIES FIVE  
WHAT INTIMACY WITH GOD LOOKS LIKE**

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**I Jn. 2:12-14; Matt. 11:27; Prov. 3:32; Jn. 14:7-10; Ps. 73:25**

The Super Bowl is over. The ultimate game of the year is now complete. Considering the last second conclusion, it was perhaps the most exciting Super Bowls of all time. I know it was exciting because even my wife, Julie, sat down to watch the last moments of the game. As far as I can determine, that is the only football she has ever watched in our 25 years of marriage.

On the other hand, she has never missed a half-time. As far as she is concerned, without the half-time extravaganza, the Super Bowl is just a game.

And the St. Louis Rams won. How many were pulling for the Rams? And the Tennessee Titans lost. How many were pulling for the Titans? How many didn't really care?

•SLIDE #1: Well, it was exciting. And the Titans came up one yard short. Look at the picture. They didn't make. Tackled on the one on the last play of the game—now they are losers. It doesn't matter that they played well enough to win. Or that they had a great season, or enjoyed it and brought delight to their fans. They lost. The Titans will forever be known as the team that lost the big one. They lost. Careers will not be complete until they win the big one.

Americans always stretching for the goal line. Measure to know when we have arrived. If we don't make it and win, then we are losers.

Last week we examined in 1 John a reassuring passage about our maturity and intimacy with God.  
READ 1 JOHN 2:12-14.

•SLIDE #2: Three spiritual levels are enunciated in 1 John 2:12-14. We see here not just a progression in spiritual growth; we see here a progression in depths of intimacy with God. There are different levels of spiritual maturity. There are different levels of intimacy.

When do we know that we are spiritually mature? How do we know that we have finally arrived? What if we don't make it to full maturity as a father or mother? Does that mean we are losers like the Titans? Is there some goal line I have to cross to achieve the level of mother or father? Is that when God considers me a winner like the Rams?

I have discovered that maturity is not like that at all. It is a process of becoming more like God—it is never completed. But, we know when we are making progress—and we enjoy every stage. And someday when we least expect it, we realize we are no longer just children; then one day we discover that we are acting more and more like Spiritual mothers and fathers and we are enjoying a deep intimacy with the very heart of God.

Remember from last week: get the tape:

•SLIDE #3: CHILDREN: KNOW SECURITY AND PEACE WITH THE FATHER

•SLIDE #4: YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN: LEARNING SKILLS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Young men and women are learning about the power and character of the God with whom they now have a deepening relationship.

•SLIDE #6: MOTHERS AND FATHERS: EXPERIENCING INTIMACY WITH GOD

The whole idea behind this passage in 1 John is that God wants to have a relationship with us.

- SLIDE #5: Talked about how much God wants and desires to have a relationship with us. A God of love does not exist in a vacuum. He needs someone to love. The entire universe of creation may well be an expression of God's desire to have an intimate relationship with each of us.

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.

Let me give you some of the characteristics of SPIRITUAL MOTHERS AND FATHERS: Here is the kind of relationship we want to develop someday with the Father in Heaven.

Not all characteristics—key off of Christ's relationship with His Father.

- SLIDE #7: 1. ARE SECURELY CONFIDENT IN GOD'S LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE

READ JOHN 6:27: "Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

READ JOHN 11:41-42: "So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

Can you comprehend the deep sense of security that the Son has in the love and acceptance of His Father? It is astounding.

Let me tell you about a man and woman who were having marriage problems. He was overworking to achieve all sorts of monetary and financial goals—at the expense of his wife and family.

At one point he confessed to the counselor: "I spent the last 20 years of my business career making a lot of money. The pay checks increased over the years and after every check I called my dad to tell him how much money I made and hoped, (began to get emotional), that dad would say, "Well done, Son. I am really proud of you." But his dad never said it. And he had never told his wife.

She heard this and it broke her heart. She had no idea he was still working so hard to please his father. She leaned over and put her arms around him and began to affirm him and tell him how proud she was of him. And she began to meet this need that had gone unmet for decades. Healed their marriage.

- SLIDE #8: Remember the story of Christ's baptism? It was the beginning of his ministry. He had not done anything yet. Voice from heaven: "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." This has to do with Who we are, not with what we do. We are accepted by God because of the work of the Son.

- SLIDE #10: 2. EXPERIENCE DEEP INTIMACY WITH GOD'S OWN HEART

READ MATTHEW 11:27: All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Proverb 3:32: "The Lord takes the upright into His confidence."

"I don't feel that yet."

God can't reveal much of Himself to children. They are not spiritually ready. Why? Because of the principle

of enmeshment.

- SLIDE #12: Have you ever made a genogram? Explain Genograms: squares are males, circles are females.
- SLIDE #13: Explain Lines: double slashed between grandma and grandpa = divorce. Single line between mom and dad = usually OK but no real knowing of each other. Double line between me and granddad means = deep relationship, he really knew me. Wiggly line between mom and dad is conflict. Dotted line between me and dad = distant relationship.
- SLIDE #14: Triple line between me and mom = Enmeshment: Parent enters into inappropriate relationship with a child. Lives our life through child: pushes them into sports, ballet and parent lives vicariously through them. Or, Mom and Dad have bad relationship filled with conflict. Mom begins to confide in daughter against dad. Tells her things best not for her to know, but it makes mom feel better, but it devastates the daughter.

There are depths of intimacy and things God wants to reveal to His children, but they are not ready for it.

Spiritual Mothers and Fathers experience this intimacy continually.  
But we can enjoy it at any level.

- SLIDE #11: Bronwyn had been an exchange student in Germany. Very little support from the family. All alone. Went to Norway. She knew no Norwegian. Began journal her prayers and life and feelings with God. "There was no place else to go." and intimacy with God.

Psalm 73:25

- SLIDE #15: 3. VIEW LIFE AND EXPERIENCES FROM GOD'S HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE

READ JOHN 3:31-32: "The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth. The one who comes from heaven is above all. He testifies to what he has seen and heard, but no one accepts his testimony.

- SLIDE #16: I mean that they interpret the Bible from the resurrection side of the cross.  
EXPLAIN the spiritual growth chart.

STORY: Nathan: "Dad, my head hurts." 4 years old. Brain aneurysm, Lived 4 days, removed off of life support. Dad was not a sp father but he was thinking like a sp father.

Psalm 116: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Seeing things from a heavenly perspective doesn't mean that we know all. God is allowed to have his mysteries and secrets.

Mark 13:32: "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

STORY: Fosdick and the Pacific Ocean

Refuse to dogmatize on earth because of a growing understanding that god is bigger than anyone can fathom.  
Christian fights and divisions

•SLIDE #17: I have discovered that as we climb the mountains of maturity and discover more and more of the heights of God's heart and character we discover that there is so much more on the other side: There is another mountain peak still to scale.

•SLIDE #18: 4. SHARE THE CHARACTER OF GOD

TELL JOHN 14:7-10: From now on, you do know my Father and have seen him." Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

The fruit of the spirit in Galatians 6: love, joy, peace, patience, etc.

"Be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect."

"Blessed are the merciful.

•SLIDE #18: Perhaps you wonder why I put John Wyatt's picture on this slide?

I wish you knew John better. Heart to please God. At every turn in life he has dedicated his life to helping God's people learn to worship and glorify God. Gentle, and humble, sensitive, kind, generous, faith. Mountain View Baptist introduction from Minister of music. I have met many worship leaders in large churches and they have egos as big as balloons. John Wyatt is the most humble man I ever met."

•SLIDE #19: 5. PARTNER WITH GOD IN HIS WORK AND MINISTRY

Remember Matthew 11:28-30: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Used to preach that: "Jesus has a yoke over there and we need to pick it up and get to work. Sacrifice and struggle and give life for Christ. Now let's get to work."

New perspective. Tough growing up. STORY of Brie coming out of school. Head down, struggling. Had this deep feeling of compassion. Felt so sorry for her.

"Roger, I am wanting to minister to her. But I am so tired of ministering to her alone. You are so busy. You pray for me to take care of her and I really want to do that. But, it is really hard to do this by myself.

Why don't you yoke up beside me and let's do this together."

My number one job as a parent is to minister to my children's aloneness.

There is a deep sense of relationship when God and I do this together.

Have to use a male illustration. One thing I enjoyed so much about playing ball in school was the team interaction. I loved the fellowship and camaraderie with the boys I played with: the winning, losing, the plays, the work, the practice.

I play golf but it is not the same. In golf you are on your own.

God says, "I don't want to do this by myself. Join me. Let's do this together.

As a mom or dad, pick up the yoke with God and minister to your children. No one else can get in that yoke beside Jesus like you can.

As we mature spiritually, we no longer minister for our children because they are our flesh and blood, we pick

up the yoke and help Jesus minister to someone else's children.

Nurture spiritual children and young people  
Evangelize children and grow them up

Spiritual mothers and fathers understand that their responsibility to produce fruit increases, and spiritual work becomes more difficult—and not easier as they mature.

4<sup>th</sup> grade—life was tough. :Lie in bed at night and wish I were grown up like my dad when life would get easy. Go to work, make money, stay up as late as I want. No worries. Then one day I grew up. I'd love to go back to 4<sup>th</sup> grade!

I used to think, become spiritual father and enjoy fellowship with all other fathers—no, no. Corn falls into ground and dies.

•SLIDE #21: READ MARK 4:28-29: All by itself the soil produces grain-- first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come."

Three levels of spiritual growth here. Mature corn does not sit around enjoying fellowship with all the other kernels of corn.

•SLIDE #22: It falls into the ground and dies: It is planted, shell breaks and life comes out and it produces much fruit.

My best years after 50.

•SLIDE #23: READ JOHN 13:3: Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;

Look at the intimacy. He knows all, has all power, come from God and returning to God.

Does any one here know what the next verse says?

•SLIDE #23: so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Jesus knows all, coming back to God—washes feet.

•SLIDE #24: 6. UNDERSTANDS THAT GOD'S REPUTATION IS THE ONE THAT MATTERS.

*It is all about God.*

*John 17:24-26: 24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."*

*Life is not about us. Still need OK for needs to be met.*

CLOSE by experiencing some intimacy with God. Here is how to do this.

•SLIDE #26: Psalm 131:1-3:

My heart is not proud, O LORD, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.

But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me.

O Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.