

INTIMACY WITH GOD October 9, 2002

Intimate

- closely acquainted, familiar, close
- private, personal
- detailed, thorough
- a very close friend
- attached, inseparable, devoted to
- private, secret, confidential
- detailed, deep, profound
- complete, total, exhaustive
- cozy, snug, comfortable, warm
- confident, boy-friend - girlfriend
- soul mate, brother, sister

Intimacy - an intimate act especially sexual intercourse

- an intimate remark, an endearment

Intercourse - communication or dealings between individuals

- sexual intercourse

- communion between human beings and God

- communication, dealings, interaction, contact

Communion

- a sharing of thoughts, fellowship

- participation

- a sharing in common

- a body or group within the Christian faith

This intimacy could be a friendship that is deep. They are able to discuss private issues and receive advice from each other. They are confident and comfortable in this intimate relationship. They enjoy being with each other and one another's company. But the intimacy goes no further than this.

Many of us have this level of intimacy, with our Father - God, and that is very good. At this level many of us really enjoy our intimacy with God, and want an even greater intimacy with Him – to be in His presence, to experience His Glory, to talk with Him. This is still a higher level of intimacy with the creator of the universe, with the One who is Love.

This level of intimacy is so great, so close, so exciting, it could be likened to the intimacy between a husband and wife. An intimacy that sometimes produces offspring. An intimacy that experiences a deeper level of love, trust and joy. An intimacy that is able to overcome the problems, difficulties and trials that buffet it, a permanent relationship with an exciting future. But this example of intimacy between husband and wife is only a simple version of what true intimacy with God really is. Intimacy with Him is so much more, so much more fulfilling, so much more satisfying, so much more complete with so much more promise of a future.

True intimacy with our Heavenly Father is so great and all-encompassing that no words can adequately describe it. Our private, inseparable, exhaustive - intimate relationship to Him is possible and no one wants that relationship more than He does. Once again it is up to us to pursue that relationship that He wants to have with us, that intimacy.

Then when we have achieved this level of intimacy with Him we will find another level and another level of intimacy. Time is of the essence (crucial). Now God is calling us to a more intimate relationship with Him. You may say, "I'm already satisfied with the relationship and intimacy I have with God. Everything is doing fine". But you might also be saying, "I sure need something, or maybe that would be a good idea, or maybe I should check it out to see if that would help".

Well, yes, let's check it out. At the beginning of the school year, a teacher has little knowledge of his students, but soon becomes familiar or intimate with them. This could be considered the first level of intimacy – getting to know the students. Soon the teacher learns more of the personality of the students, their weaknesses and strengths. He is gaining a more detailed or complete knowledge of his students – another level of intimacy. As all of these things transpire between teacher and students, both become more comfortable or intimate.

A student may then have a personal problem that he or she feels they must discuss with someone. Feeling the teacher would guard his privacy, he shares confidential information – another level of intimacy. As the student gains a trust in this teacher he feels he is able to be more intimate or personal with him. So we can see small, but important levels of intimacy being established. Perhaps by the end of the school term that student has been able to trust himself and the teacher, has a friendly relationship and respect for the teacher. The teacher also has gained closeness and respect for the student. There has been an intimacy established between the two.

I know we as Christians have gone through the various levels of intimacy with God mentioned above. But there is another level of intimacy – that between close friends. A trust has already been established as well as a love relationship.

With God, an intimate relationship with our Father will never be boring, tiring or of no value.

Let me urge you again to become more intimate, more closely acquainted with, inseparable from this Glorious God that we have. If we take the necessary steps to meet Him, He will be there waiting for us – our Father that wants more intimacy with us.

Some examples of intimacy in God's Word.

1. Luke 6:17 - 21. And Jesus came down with them and took His stand on a level spot, with a great crowd of His disciples and a vast throng of people from all over Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to listen to Him and to be cured of their diseases– 18 Even those who were disturbed and troubled with unclean spirits, and they were being healed [also]. 19 And all the multitude were seeking to touch Him, for healing power was all the while going forth from Him and curing them all [saving them from severe illnesses or calamities]. 20 And solemnly lifting up His eyes on His disciples, He said: Blessed (happy–with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favour and salvation, apart from your outward condition–and to be envied) are you poor and lowly and afflicted (destitute of wealth, influence, position, and honour), for the kingdom of God is yours!

Notice how Jesus loved the people and cared for them. Also notice how the people trusted Him. There was an intimacy between Jesus and the people.

2. Luke 10:27. And he replied. You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.

We are instructed to have a more intimate relationship with God, others and ourselves.

3. Luke 22:14 - 20. And when the hour came, [Jesus] reclined at table, and the apostles with Him. 15 And He said to them, I have earnestly and intensely desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I say to you, I shall eat it no more until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. 17 and He took a cup, and when He had given thanks, He said, Take this and divide and distribute it among yourselves; 18 For I say to you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine at all until the kingdom of God comes. 19 Then He took a loaf [of bread] and when He had given thanks, He broke [it] and gave it to them saying, This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me. 20 And in like manner, He took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament or covenant [ratified] in My blood, which is shed (poured out) for you.

This story of the "last supper" showed the love, confidence, close friendship, intimacy Jesus and His disciples had.

4. The book of "The Song of Solomon" is full of examples of intimacy. Chapter 2:6 .."I can feel his left hand under my head and his right hand embrace me"!

An intimacy we are all familiar with in the physical realm. It also applies to the spiritual realm. God is being intimate with us, a pure intimacy.

Chapter 8:14. [Joyfully the radiant bride turned to him, the one altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand to her soul, and with unconcealed eagerness to begin her life of sweet companionship with him, she answered] Make haste, my beloved, and come quickly, like a gazelle or a young hart [and take me to our waiting home] upon the mountains of spices!

Here we see a very private, personal intimacy that we can seek after, with our God. A greater level of intimacy as a result of our love relationship with Him.

5. Psalms 42:1, 2. As the hart pants and longs for the water brooks, so I pant and long for You, O God. 2 My inner self thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God?

David was hungry for a greater intimacy with the living God. This should be our prayer too.

6. Look at the intimacy that Jesus would like with us. John 7:37 - 39. Now on the final and most important day of the Feast, Jesus stood, and He cried in a loud voice, If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink! 38 He who believes in Me [who cleaves to and trusts in and relies on Me] as the Scripture has said, From his innermost being shall flow [continuously] springs and rivers of living water. 39 But He was speaking here of the Spirit, Whom those who believed (trusted, had faith) in Him were afterward to receive. For the [Holy] Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (raised to honour).

7. In I Cor. 13 – the Love chapter – read for yourself to see the kind of intimacy God has for us and how we are to act toward others.

Finally this intimacy with our magnificent God and Father is so good, so enticing that most of us will want more. As we seek for a more intimate relationship with Him, He will meet us where we are and lead us to new levels of intimacy with Him. He hears the cry of our heart and always responds.

Bill Ferguson