

# Growing in Intimacy with God - Part 1

Contributed by Joshua Hawkins  
Friday, 18 July 2008

We

all desire intimacy with God on a deep level. It's what we were made and fashioned for. But what exactly does it mean and how do we grow in it? Most believers are confident that they desire intimacy with Jesus, but few can tell you exactly what it means or how to obtain it. Intimacy with God is not supposed to be just a vague and nebulous idea that only a few are able to truly obtain in life. We need clarity on exactly what it is and how we obtain it because we can never expect to lay hold of something unless we know what we're looking for.

Intimacy with God is much more than just understanding the idea of intimacy. Sermons, books, teaching series, articles, and handouts on intimacy with God are great, but in themselves do not bring us into true intimacy. We can fall in love with the call to intimacy with God and never actually enter into intimacy itself.

Intimacy with God is also much more than the sentiments of our soul, or feeling joy, love, and pleasure as a result of the knowledge of Him. Experiential love is critical in our relationship with the Lord, but we must understand that these are the fruits of intimacy, not the substance of intimacy itself.

Intimacy with God can be best defined with one word &ndash; knowledge.

Intimacy with God can be best defined with one word &ndash; knowledge. We intuitively know this because of our human relationships, but we often times fail to apply this concept to our desire for intimacy with God. The reason why I love my parents or my brother or my good friends is because I have gotten to know them. Knowledge produces love. I'm not just speaking about a factual knowledge, but a relational knowledge. This love then causes us to know more deeply, in turn causing us to love deeper, and this glorious cycle only intensifies from there.

God's desire is for us to know Him deeply. This is not only possible, but it is the definition of normal Christianity. God has given every single believer in Jesus the grace by the cross and the Holy Spirit to take us into mature character and abandoned willing love, if we are indeed willing. If we don't think this is normal, we'll count ourselves out and disqualify ourselves before even trying to run the race. If we have a theological perspective and argument that gives us an "out", we'll take it immediately because of our weakness and shortcomings. But if we know deep down that every believer is called to the heights of intimacy, we will have courage to go on the journey of love.

Now that there's a bit more clarity on what intimacy is, the question of "how do I grow in it" becomes synonymous with "how do I grow in the knowledge of God?" The only answer to this question is to discover the greatest source of the revelation of God. If we could find the greatest well of the revelation of God to drink from, we would actually grow in intimacy. Revelation, or supernatural help from the Holy Spirit, is the only way we come to know Him. Even though this discovery is neither mysterious nor difficult, it's profoundly neglected in our day. Finding the knowledge of God is not related to hearing the right sermon, attending a particular meeting, living in a particular place, or reading the right book. The Bible makes it unbelievably clear that the highest revelation of God can be found in beholding a Man named Jesus.

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power&hellip; Heb 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God&hellip;And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us&hellip; John 1:1-2,14

&hellip; resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2-3

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. John 1:18

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell&hellip; For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily&hellip; Colossians 1:19;2:9

The reason Jesus is the height of the revelation of God is not merely because He was a perfect human that pointed to the Father, but because He is God. He came as Yahweh in the flesh. The lack of understanding in growing in intimacy through beholding Christ is directly proportional to the lack of revelation of the divinity of Jesus. If we look in the gospels and we see that it's God there, if we see the creator Himself walking among us, if we see God hanging on the cross, then there is no question where the greatest source of revelation is to be found.

When was the last time we went to the four gospels to grow in intimacy with God?

In the next part of this series, I'll take some time to develop this a bit more and hash out some of the practical application of growing in intimacy with God.

