

Your Relationship With God

How to build and maintain intimacy with the Lord

INTRODUCTION

When we accept Jesus in our hearts, we are given the opportunity to know God. You have been saved- rescued from eternity in hell without God and given the opportunity to share eternity in heaven with Him. When we become Christians, we enter into a relationship with God that was formerly impossible because of sin. Since Jesus gave His life for our sins, we can now know Him in this life and in the eternal life to come.

In John 17:3 we read: “Now this is _____ : that they may know you, the _____, and _____, whom you have sent.”

This tells us that the promise of heaven comes by intimately knowing God the Father and His only Son. We find the way to be saved and know God in Romans 10:9. Read this verse and answer the following question:

What two things must you do to be saved?

- 1) _____ with your mouth that _____ is _____
- 2) _____ in your heart that God has _____ Him from the _____

Receiving Jesus as Lord means recognizing that He is your God and Master. Believing means accepting that the Word of God is true and the message of Jesus is the only way to be saved.

“For the _____ of _____ is _____, but the _____ of _____ is _____ in _____ our _____.”
(Romans 6:23)

As with any relationship, we must work to build intimacy to keep our relationship with God healthy. He is perfect and continually does everything He can to draw you near to him. The responsibility for a healthy relationship, then, rests on us. There are several things we can do to ensure a healthy, intimate relationship with the Lord.

DISCIPLESHIP LESSON #1

There are four basic things every Christian should do to stay close to God. The answers are simple and yet profound. If you wish to remain close to God, you must pray, read the Bible, go to church, and repent of sin.

Your Relationship With God

How to build and maintain intimacy with the Lord

I. PRAYER

People often complicate prayer, when it is in fact a very simple thing: prayer is talking to God. He is always with us and always listens when His children cry out to Him. He answers prayers in different ways- yes, no, wait- even surprises us by doing things we'd never expect. But He is always there and always available. If we wish to be close to God, we should pray daily.

Read Romans 12:12. How are we told to pray in this scripture? _____

Philippians 4:6 tells us this: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in _____, by prayer and petition, with _____, present your _____ to God."

Colossians 4:2 tells us to _____ ourselves to prayer. What two qualities does this verse tell us to maintain in prayer?

- 1) be _____ - keep your life in line with God's Word
- 2) be _____ - give recognition to God for His goodness

Some people struggle with knowing how to pray. What should we pray for when we talk to God? What kind of prayer does God desire? The answer is found in Jesus example of how to pray. In Matthew 6:9-13 , we find what is commonly referred to as the Lord's prayer.

"This, then, is _____ you should _____:"

- 1) Praise- "Our _____ in heaven, _____ be your name,"
- 2) God's Kingdom- " _____ come, _____ be done on earth as it is in heaven."
- 3) Needs- " _____ us today our daily _____."
- 4) Forgiveness- " _____ us our _____, as we also have forgiven our debtors."
- 5) Protection- "And lead us not into _____, but _____ us from the _____."

When we pray, we should praise God for who He is and what He's done, pray that His Kingdom will be advanced and people will be saved, present our needs, ask for forgiveness of sins, and pray for God to guide and protect us.

II. THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's life instruction manual to us. We need to read and memorize the Word of God to build a strong relationship with Him.

Your Relationship With God

How to build and maintain intimacy with the Lord

2 Timothy 2:15 tells us this: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the _____ of _____.”

To present ourselves to God and receive His approval, we must be people who are attentive to His Word. Through the Bible, we can become more like Jesus.

In 1 Timothy 4:4-5, we are told that everything is sanctified by what two things? _____

The Bible is important if we wish to have a close relationship with God. Through the Bible, he reveals Himself and His will to us.

The question is, what should we do with the Word of God? We should learn about it, obey its commands, memorize it, and meditate on it (that is, think about what it means). Fill in the blanks next to the following verses with the corresponding principle listed in this paragraph.

- 1) _____ (Psalm 119:4)
- 2) _____ (Psalm 119:7)
- 3) _____ (Psalm 119:11)
- 4) _____ (Psalm 119:15)

There are many resources out there to help you develop a daily reading schedule for the scripture, such as one year Bibles and devotional books. These can be very helpful in developing spiritual disciplines and building your faith.

III. CHURCH

It's not very popular to tell people they need to God to church. People feel that the church is just another human institution that wants to control them. In reality, the church isn't the building or organization. It's the people. Whether you choose to fellowship with other Christians or not, God has ordained that you are part of the church.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. In this scripture, the church is compared to what? _____

Read verse 27 again. It tells us: “Now you are the _____ of _____, and each one of you is a _____ of it.”

You are a part of the church, the body of Christ, when you become a Christian. You are called to fellowship with other Christians, building each other up in faith.

Your Relationship With God

How to build and maintain intimacy with the Lord

Hebrews 12:25 talks about meeting together as a church. What are we commanded to do in this scripture?

- 1) "let us not give up _____"
- 2) "let us _____"
- 3) "all the _____ as you see the Day approaching"

Clearly, we are to meet together and fellowship with each other as members of the body of Christ. God has called us to encourage one another and to meet together more and more as His return draws nearer and nearer.

IV. REPENTENCE

We have been saved and God has forgiven us of our sins. How wonderful! But the reality that we still have a sinful nature sets in rather quickly. We fall short. We fail. What do we do when we sin?

We have to understand that, until we are glorified by Christ in Heaven, we will struggle with sin.

Read Romans 3:23. What do we all fall short of? _____

Read Romans 6:23. What is the price of sin? What is the gift of God? _____

Read Hebrews 12:14. What standard do we have to meet to see the Lord? _____

No one is perfect except God alone. We cannot live up to the standard of perfection, no matter how hard we try. That is why Jesus died for our sins- to pay the price of death and offer his forgiveness. When we fail, we can repent- turn away from our mistakes and sins and ask God to forgive us- and He will take away our sins.

Read 1 John 1:9. When we confess our sins, what two things does God promise to do?

- 1) _____ our sins
- 2) _____ us from unrighteousness

God's work in us is complete. When we confess our sins and turn them over to Him, He not only forgives us, but removes sin from our lives and helps us to be holy. He purifies us as we surrender to Him!

Your Relationship With God

How to build and maintain intimacy with the Lord

CONCLUSION

If we want to be close to God, we must read the Bible, pray, go to church and fellowship with other Christians, and repent when we fail and fall short. God is continually doing His part. If we do our part, we will experience intimacy with God.

ASSIGNMENT

This week, put to practice what you learned today. Whenever you sin, repent and surrender that area of your life to God. He'll forgive you and cleanse you. Go to church and whatever church activities are happening this week. Fellowship, encourage, and be encouraged by other believers. Finally, begin to work on developing the discipline of praying and reading the Bible. This week, try to pray for at least 10 minutes a day. Do more if you feel like it, but don't try to bite off more than you can chew. You will grow in prayer as you grow with God. Also, try to memorize Psalm 119:11 and read one of the following scriptures each day:

- 1) Matthew 5
- 2) Matthew 6
- 3) Matthew 7
- 4) Matthew 18
- 5) Mark 4
- 6) Mark 12
- 7) Luke 9

When you read these scriptures, it's a good idea to write down any observations or spiritual truths you find in these scriptures. Also, write down any questions or things you don't understand so you can talk about those things when you meet for discipleship next week. Remember, by praying, reading the Bible, fellowshiping with the body of Christ, and repenting of sin, you can grow close to God and come to know Him better!