



THE ADVENTURE OF INTIMACY

Prayer is the experience of intimacy. Every man believes in prayer in some form, whether a cry of desperation in a foxhole or the true expression of a heart focused on worship. Prayer is a connection of intimacy and becomes the means of experiencing the awe of God. Intimacy is the deep longing of every man and yet so many men suffer from the inability to attain truth, respect, and lasting love in their relationships. This series will explore how to experience true intimacy and trusting love with God and in your most important relationships.

A Man understands that God is available and yet, his past may inhibit his ability to connect to God.

February 9, 2017

FACING GOD – Available or Abandoned?
Psalm 27:9,10; Galatians 4:6-8

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

Bible Verses: Psalms 27:9,10;Galatians 4:4-8;Ephesians 1:3-10;John 1:12-13;Romans 8:14-16;Romans 8:26-28; Hebrews 8:6Hebrews 12:24;Hebrews 9:14-16
Music: MercyMe-God with Us

Videos: The Squid and the Whale - A Family Meeting
The Squid and the Whale - It's Our House

Resources: (1) Prayer – Experiencing Awe & Intimacy with God by Timothy Keller
(2) The Intimacy Factor by Pia Mellody

WHO? > PRAYER: INTIMATE CONVERSATION WITH GOD.

1. _____? > You do not want to know about God, but to know God, to seek His face and presence. Timothy Ward – *Words of Life*: “To encounter the words of Scripture is to encounter God in action.” What does the Bible say about experiencing God.
2. _____ > God is infinitely, profoundly happy, filled with perfect joy—not some abstract tranquility but the fierce happiness of dynamic loving relationships. Knowing this God is not to get beyond emotions or thoughts but to be filled with glorious love and joy. Augustine: “our ability to love other persons is just an image of the internal Trinitarian love that we were created to reflect. God wants to share the joy he has. Prayer invites to enter into the happiness of God himself.
3. _____ > Prayer is the way to sense and appropriate God’s fatherly love and to experience the calm and strength in the assurance of being cared for. You have access to your Heavenly Father at all times.
 - a. God, the Father > Adopted sons and daughters: Ephesians 1:3-10.
 - b. God, the Son > Right to be His children and call him Father: John 1:12-13.
 - c. God, the Spirit > Actual life of God put in us: Galatians 4:4-6.

HOW? > ENCOUNTER GOD: ADOPTION AND MEDIATOR.

1. _____ > If you have a real faith, you will desire to pray, because through the Spirit, prayer is faith become audible.
 - a. Filled with confidence in God’s loving attention: Romans 8:14-16. The Spirit leads us to “cry”—a Greek word, *krazdo*, that means a loud, fervent cry, which is often used in the Old Testament to denote fervent prayer, as in “Abba, Father.” This is like calling God “Papa.” There is no desperate, anxious gamble, but a confident faith that is expressed in prayer.
 - b. Praying for us—the Spirit as Intercessor: Romans 8:26-28. This groaning is the Spirit’s being with us. This “groaning” is the desire to please God and understand what is best for us.
2. _____ > Jesus is the mediator between you and God (Hebrews 8:6; 12:24). God became like you, equally mortal and subject to suffering and death. He did it so you could be forgiven and justified by faith apart from your efforts and merits. The new relationship cannot fail because it is based on His faithfulness, not yours (Hebrews 9:14-16).

CRITICAL REMINDERS TO ENGAGING GOD.

1. _____ > Jesus taught His disciples that they must pray in His name (John 14:13-14). The only approach to God ... the only way to God is Jesus Himself. Jesus’ death on the cross reconciled us to God (Ephesians 2:16) and make God our Father.
2. _____ > The primary motive of Spirit-directed, Christ-mediated prayer is to simply know God better and enjoy His presence—to be with Him (Galatians 4:6-8).
3. _____ > Jesus Christ bore all the eternal punishment that our sins deserve. That is the cost of prayer. Jesus paid the price to God could be our father. The only time in all the gospels that Jesus Christ prays to God and doesn’t call him Father is on the cross.

INTIMACY: SEE THE BIG PICTURE—KNOW YOUR STORY.

1. _____ > Men who survive the trauma inflicted by a dysfunctional family system develop complex ways to bear the pain and deny the truth of the way they were treated.
2. _____ > As children they learn how to hide and distort their true thoughts and feelings.
3. _____ > They deny the thoughts and emotions associated with traumatic events and the caregivers who were responsible for perpetrating them.
4. _____ > They mask vulnerable emotions behind less vulnerable emotions. For example, they may cover their fear with contempt of their pain with anger or their sense of worthlessness with rage.
5. _____ > You must begin to examine what actually happened to you as a child, what you felt when you were wounded, and how the resulting trauma distorted both your image of yourself and you expectations for relationships. You must understand your trauma created the issues you have with self-esteem, boundaries, reality, dependence, and balance.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Who is God?
2. How does God see you?
3. How has your life been shaped by your father?

Bible Verses

Psalm 27:9,10

9 Don't hide from me now! You've always been right there for me; don't turn your back on me now. Don't throw me out, don't abandon me; you've always kept the door open. **10** My father and mother walked out and left me, but God took me in.

Galatians 4:4-8

4 But when the time arrived that was set by God the Father, God sent his Son, born among us of a woman, born under the conditions of the law so that he might redeem those of us who have been kidnapped by the law. **5** Thus we have been set free to experience our rightful heritage. **6** You can tell for sure that you are now fully adopted as his own children because God sent the Spirit of his Son into our lives crying out, "Papa! Father!" **7** Doesn't that privilege of intimate conversation with God make it plain that you are not a slave, but a child? And if you are a child, you're also an heir, with complete access to the inheritance. **8** Earlier, before you knew God personally, you were enslaved to so-called gods that had nothing of the divine about them.

Ephesians 1:3-10

3 How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He's the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. **4** Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. **5** Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) **6** He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son. **7** Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people - free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free, either. Abundantly free! **8** He thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, **9** letting us in on the plans he took such delight in making. He set it all out before us in Christ, **10a** long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth.

John 1:12-13

12 But whoever did want him, who believed he was who he claimed and would do what he said, He made to be their true selves, their child-of-God selves. **13** These are the God-begotten, not blood-begotten, not flesh-begotten, not sex-begotten.

Romans 8:14-16

14 God's Spirit beckons. There are things to do and places to go! **15** This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" **16** God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children.

Romans 8:26-28

26 Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. **27** He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. **28** That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.

Hebrews 8:6

6 But Jesus' priestly work far surpasses what these other priests do, since he's working from a far better plan.

Hebrews 12:24

24 You've come to Jesus, who presents us with a new covenant, a fresh charter from God. He is the Mediator of this covenant. The murder of Jesus, unlike Abel's - a homicide that cried out for vengeance - became a proclamation of grace.

Hebrews 9:14-16

14 think how much more the blood of Christ cleans up our whole lives, inside and out. **15** Through the Spirit, Christ offered himself as an unblemished sacrifice, freeing us from all those dead-end efforts to make ourselves respectable, so that we can live all out for God. **16** Like a will that takes effect when someone dies, the new covenant was put into action at Jesus' death. His death marked the transition from the old plan to the new one, canceling the old obligations and accompanying sins, and summoning the heirs to receive the eternal inheritance that was promised them. He brought together God and his people in this new way.

God with Us By MercyMe

Who are we that you would be mindful of us
What do you see that's worth looking our way
We are free in ways that we never should be
Sweet release from the grip of these chains like hinges
Straining from the weight my heart no longer can keep from singing

All that is within me cries for you alone be glorified Emmanuel God
with us
My heart sings a brand new song
The debt is paid
These chains are gone
Emmanuel God with us

Lord you know our hearts don't deserve your glory
Still you show a love we cannot afford like
Hinges straining from the weight

My heart no longer can keep from singing
All that is within me cries for you alone be glorified Emmanuel God
with us

My heart sings a brand new song
The debt is paid
These chains are gone
Emmanuel God with us

Such a tiny offering compared to Calvary nevertheless we lay it at
your feet.
All that is within me cries for you alone be glorified Emmanuel God
with us
My heart sings a brand new song
The debt is paid
These chains are gone
Emmanuel God with us

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INTIMACY WITH GOD



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2. **Dynamic Loving Relationship** > God is infinitely, profoundly happy, filled with perfect joy—not some abstract tranquility but the fierce happiness of dynamic loving relationships. Knowing this God is not to get beyond emotions or thoughts but to be filled with glorious love and joy. Augustine: “our ability to love other persons is just an image of the internal Trinitarian love that we were created to reflect. God wants to share the joy he has. Prayer invites to enter into the happiness of God himself.
3. **Father Love** > Prayer is the way to sense and appropriate God’s fatherly love and to experience the calm and strength in the assurance of being cared for. You have access to your Heavenly Father at all times.
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INTIMACY: SEE THE BIG PICTURE—KNOW YOUR STORY.

1. **Know the Truth** > Men who survive the trauma inflicted by a dysfunctional family system develop complex ways to bear the pain and deny the truth of the way they were treated.
2. **Stop Hiding** > As children they learn how to hide and distort their true thoughts and feelings.
3. **Stop Denial** > They deny the thoughts and emotions associated with traumatic events and the caregivers who were responsible for perpetrating them.
4. **Stop Masking Vulnerability** > They mask vulnerable emotions behind less vulnerable emotions. For example, they may cover their fear with contempt of their pain with anger or their sense of worthlessness with rage.
5. **Recovery—Embrace Your Story** > You must begin to examine what actually happened to you as a child, what you felt when you were wounded, and how the resulting trauma distorted both your image of your self and your expectations for relationships. You must understand your trauma created the issues you have with self-esteem, boundaries, reality, dependence, and balance.

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GOD

