



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 knows that connection to God and the practice of setting boundaries is essential to intimacy.

April 20, 2017

Critical Sign Posts on the Journey to Intimacy!

Highland Colony Men's Roundtable
www.MensTable.com

Bible Verses: Nehemiah 9:16-21, Exodus 34:6,7,Psalm 103:3,4,Micah 7:18-19, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Galatians 3:10-14,Ephesians 1:7, Galatians 5:22-24,

Videos: The Green Mile – Ending
Resources: Prayer – Experiencing Awe & Intimacy with God by Timothy Keller
The Intimacy Factor by Pia Mellody

Music: Even If – Mercy Me

ZAKAR: Remember > Covenant Relationship!

1. _____ > God relates to you by way of a covenant—a solemn and binding yet highly personal and intimate relationship. Both parties swear faithfulness to the other (Exodus 6:7). The history recorded in the Bible is an account of individuals and communities continually breaking their promises and obligations to God. Yet, God remains faithful—He will forgive and restore us (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:24-29).
2. _____ > Is your covenant relationship with God conditional, based on His love for you? In the end, will His holiness and justice be more fundamental than His love and mercy, OR will it be the other way around? Will He punish you or forgive you? Exodus 34:6,7 expresses this suspenseful mystery, this great tension.
3. _____ > Christ's atoning sacrifice means that no sin can bring you into condemnation (Gal. 3:10-14; Eph. 1:7). It also means that sin is so serious and grievous to God that Jesus had to die. You must recognize both of these aspects of God's Grace or you will lapse into one or the other two fatal errors. Either you will think forgiveness is easy for God to give and that will lead to superficial confession and no change, OR you will doubt the reality and thoroughness of your pardon and that leads to continued guilt, shame, and self-loathing, therefore, no relief.

ZAKAR: Remember – Self Examination and Repentance.

1. _____ > We need regular times of self-examination using guidelines that come from biblical descriptions of what maturity is meant to be (Galatians 5:22-24). George Whitefield: "God give me a deep humility, a well-guided zeal, a burning love and a single eye, and then let men or devils do their worst!"
 - a. _____ – Examination = Have I looked down on anyone? Have I been too stung by criticism? Have I felt snubbed and ignored? Consider the free grace of Jesus until I sense (a) decreasing disdain, since I am a sinner too, and (b) decreasing pain over criticism, since I should not value human approval over God's love.
 - b. _____ – Examination = Have I avoided people or tasks that I know I should face? Have I been anxious and worried? Have I failed to be circumspect, or have I been rash and impulsive? Consider the free grace of Jesus until there is (a) no cowardly avoidance of hard things, since Jesus faced evil for me, and (b) no anxious or rash behavior, since Jesus' death proves that God cares and will watch over me.
 - c. _____ – Examination = Have I spoken or thought unkindly of anyone? Am I justifying myself by caricaturing someone else in my mind? Have I been impatient and irritable? Have I been self-absorbed, indifferent, and inattentive to people? Consider the free grace of Jesus until there is (a) no coldness or unkindness, (b) no impatience, (c) no indifference.
 - d. _____ – Examination = Am I doing what I do for God's glory and the good of others, or am I being driven by fears, need for approval, love of comfort and ease, need for control, hunger for acclaim and power, or the fear of people (Luke 12:4-5).

ZAKAR: Remember – Critical Thoughts on Intimacy!

1. _____ > When you operate out of the center of your core issues through the practice of boundaries, your self-esteem is automatically restored.
2. _____ > The two grand lies children hear from parents are that they are "better than" or "less than." The truth is that a child, as well as every other human on the planet, has inherent worth.
3. _____ > Finding Center! Damage—woundedness—trauma to every core issue results in extremes: "less than," "better than"; no boundaries, walls; "I am a good person," "I am a bad person"; "I want others to help me," "I don't want any help"; "I am rigid," "I am a victim."
4. _____ > It is in relationship that we get triggered. Usually it is someone close to us who triggers us the extremes of the core issues and brings up trauma issues. You must understand your story—where does your principal wounding come from?
5. _____ > When something triggers one of your wounds, you begin to feel emotions associated with one of those childhood states. Self awareness allows you to identify the emotion attached to that childhood wound.
6. _____ > Healing takes place when you begin to straighten out the lies of "better than" and "less than" and finding your place of centeredness and the place of inherent worth. That is spiritual healing!
7. _____ > The place of trust that allows you to not defend yourself or attack another. You must learn the truth about who you are. Boundary work within the reality issue enables you to tell the truth about who you are. All core work is learning how to live in truth and in living in truth learning to love self and others.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. Where are YOU > do you have a greater sense of your unworthiness & sin OR do you feel a greater sense of forgiveness and value?
2. What wrong do you need to acknowledge?
3. When you struggle do you generally go to "better than" or "less than?"

Bible Verses

Nehemiah 9:16-21: **16** But they, our ancestors, were arrogant; bullheaded, they wouldn't obey your commands. **17** They turned a deaf ear, they refused to remember the miracles you had done for them; They turned stubborn, got it into their heads to return to their Egyptian slavery. And you, a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, Incredibly patient, with tons of love - you didn't dump them. **18** Yes, even when they cast a sculpted calf and said, "This is your god Who brought you out of Egypt," and continued from bad to worse, **19** You in your amazing compassion didn't walk off and leave them in the desert. The Pillar of Cloud didn't leave them; daily it continued to show them their route; The Pillar of Fire did the same by night, showed them the right way to go. **20** You gave them your good Spirit to teach them to live wisely. You never stinted with your manna, gave them plenty of water to drink. **21** You supported them forty years in that desert; they had everything they needed; Their clothes didn't wear out and their feet never blistered.

Exodus 34:6-7: **6** God passed in front of him and called out, "God, God, a God of mercy and grace, endlessly patient - so much love, so deeply true - **7** loyal in love for a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin. Still, he doesn't ignore sin. He holds sons and grandsons responsible for a father's sins to the third and even fourth generation."

Psalm 103:3-4: **3** He forgives your sins - every one. He heals your diseases - every one. **4** He redeems you from hell - saves your life! He crowns you with love and mercy - a paradise crown.

Micah 7:18-19: **18** Where is the god who can compare with you - wiping the slate clean of guilt, Turning a blind eye, a deaf ear, to the past sins of your purged and precious people? You don't nurse your anger and don't stay angry long, for mercy is your specialty. That's what you love most. **19** And compassion is on its way to us. You'll stamp out our wrongdoing. You'll sink our sins to the bottom of the ocean.

Jeremiah 31:31-34: **31** "That's right. The time is coming when I will make a brand-new covenant with Israel and Judah. **32** It won't be a repeat of the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant even though I did my part as their Master." God's Decree. **33** "This is the brand-new covenant that I will make with Israel when the time comes. I will put my law within them - write it on their hearts! - and be their God. And they will be my people.

34 They will no longer go around setting up schools to teach each other about God. They'll know me firsthand, the dull and the bright, the smart and the slow. I'll wipe the slate clean for each of them. I'll forget they ever sinned!" God's Decree. If This Ordered Cosmos Ever Fell to Pieces

Galatians 3:10-14: **10** And that means that anyone who tries to live by his own effort, independent of God, is doomed to failure. Scripture backs this up: "Utterly cursed is every person who fails to carry out every detail written in the Book of the law." **11** The obvious impossibility of carrying out such a moral program should make it plain that no one can sustain a relationship with God that way. The person who lives in right relationship with God does it by embracing what God arranges for him. Doing things for God is the opposite of entering into what God does for you. Habakkuk had it right: "The person who believes God, is set right by God - and that's the real life." **12** Rule-keeping does not naturally evolve into living by faith, but only perpetuates itself in more and more rule-keeping, a fact observed in Scripture: "The one who does these things [rule-keeping] continues to live by them." **13** Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating, cursed life by absorbing it completely into himself. Do you remember the Scripture that says, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"? That is what happened when Jesus was nailed to the Cross: He became a curse, and at the same time dissolved the curse. **14** And now, because of that, the air is cleared and we can see that Abraham's blessing is present and available for non-Jews, too. We are all able to receive God's life, his Spirit, in and with us by believing - just the way Abraham received it.

Ephesians 1:7: **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!

Galatians 5:22-24: **22** But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard - things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, **23** not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely. Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. **24** Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good - crucified.

Even If By Mercy Me

I know You're able and I know You can
Save through the fire with Your mighty hand
But even if You don't
My hope is You alone

They say it only takes a little faith
To move a mountain
Good thing
A little faith is all I have right now
But God, when You choose
To leave mountains unmovable
Give me the strength to be able to sing
It is well with my soul

[Chorus]

I know You're able and I know You can
Save through the fire with Your mighty hand
But even if You don't
My hope is You alone
I know the sorrow, and I know the hurt
Would all go away if You'd just say the word

But even if You don't
My hope is You alone

You've been faithful, You've been good
All of my days
Jesus, I will cling to You
Come what may
'Cause I know You're able
I know You can

[Chorus]

I know You're able and I know You can
Save through the fire with Your mighty hand
But even if You don't
My hope is You alone
I know the sorrow, and I know the hurt
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My hope is You alone

It is well with my soul
It is well, it is well with my soul

INTIMACY WITH GOD



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.

Critical Sign Posts on the Journey To Intimacy!

Nehemiah 9:16-21 > God of Forgiveness

Exodus 34:6,7 > He does not leave the guilty unpunished

Psalm 130:3,4 > No record – Forgiveness

Micah 7:18-19 > Pardons sin and Forgives

ZAKAR: Remember > Covenant Relationship!

1. **Covenant Relationship** > God relates to you by way of a covenant—a solemn and binding yet highly personal and intimate relationship. Both parties swear faithfulness to the other (Exodus 6:7). The history recorded in the Bible is an account of individuals and communities continually breaking their promises and obligations to God. Yet, God remains faithful—He will forgive and restore us (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:24-29).
2. **The Great Tension** > Is your covenant relationship with God conditional, based on His love for you? In the end, will His holiness and justice be more fundamental than His love and mercy, OR will it be the other way around? Will He punish you or forgive you? Exodus 34:6,7 expresses this suspenseful mystery, this great tension.
3. **Resolution** > Christ's atoning sacrifice means that no sin can bring you into condemnation (Gal. 3:10-14; Eph. 1:7). It also means that sin is so serious and grievous to God that Jesus had to die. You must recognize both of these aspects of God's Grace or you will lapse into one or the other two fatal errors. Either you will think forgiveness is easy for God to give and that will lead to superficial confession and no change, OR you will doubt the reality and thoroughness of your pardon and that leads to continued guilt, shame, and self-loathing, therefore, no relief.

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1. **Self-Examination** > We need regular times of self-examination using guidelines that come from biblical descriptions of what maturity is meant to be (Galatians 5:22-24). George Whitefield: “God give me a deep humility, a well-guided zeal, a burning love and a single eye, and then let men or devils do their worst!”
 1. **Deep Humility** – Examination = Have I looked down on anyone? Have I been too stung by criticism? Have I felt snubbed and ignored? Consider the free grace of Jesus until I sense (a) decreasing disdain, since I am a sinner too, and (b) decreasing pain over criticism, since I should not value human approval over God’s love.
 2. **A well-guided zeal** – Examination = Have I avoided people or tasks that I know I should face? Have I been anxious and worried? Have I failed to be circumspect, or have I been rash and impulsive? Consider the free grace of Jesus until there is (a) no cowardly avoidance of hard things, since Jesus faced evil for me, and (b) no anxious or rash behavior, since Jesus’ death proves that God cares and will watch over me.
 3. **A burning love** – Examination = Have I spoken or thought unkindly of anyone? Am I justifying myself by caricaturing someone else in my mind? Have I been impatient and irritable? Have I been self-absorbed, indifferent, and inattentive to people? Consider the free grace of Jesus until there is (a) no coldness or unkindness, (b) no impatience, (c) no indifference.
 4. **A “single” eye** – Examination = Am I doing what I do for God’s glory and the good of others, or am I being driven by fears, need for approval, love of comfort and ease, need for control, hunger for acclaim and power, or the fear of people (Luke 12:4-5).

ZAKAR: Remember – Critical Thoughts on Intimacy!

1. **Practice Boundaries** > When you operate out of the center of your core issues through the practice of boundaries, your self-esteem is automatically restored.
2. **Inherent Worth** > The two grand lies children hear from parents are that they are “better than” or “less than.” The truth is that a child, as well as every other human on the planet, has inherent worth.
3. **Recovery** > Finding Center! Damage—woundedness—trauma to every core issue results in extremes: “less than,” “better than”; no boundaries, walls; “I am a good person,” “I am a bad person”; “I want others to help me,” “I don’t want any help”; “I am rigid,” “I am a victim.”

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4. **Relationship** > It is in relationship that we get triggered. Usually it is someone close to us who triggers us the extremes of the core issues and brings up trauma issues. You must understand your story—where does your principal wounding come from?
5. **Emotions** > When something triggers one of your wounds, you begin to feel emotions associated with one of those childhood states. Self awareness allows you to identify the emotion attached to that childhood wound.
6. **Recovering Truth** > Healing takes place when you begin to straighten out the lies of “better than” and “less than” and finding your place of centeredness and the place of inherent worth. That is spiritual healing!
7. **Containment** > The place of trust that allows you to not defend yourself or attack another. You must learn the truth about who you are. Boundary work within the reality issue enables you to tell the truth about who you are. All core work is learning how to live in truth and in living in truth learning to love self and others.

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