Intimacy With God

## Intimacy: *close familiarity or friendship, affection, personal, devoted.*

## Characteristics of an intimate relationship include, but are not limited to unconditional acceptance and closeness, to be cared for, understood, loved for who we are, and free of judgment from others. In an intimate relationship with God we have the added feature of never being alone and attaining inner peace.

## As I have in the GRASP part of my course a section called Passion for God: “Softening Our Hearts,” Godly passion had been something I was in the process of finally developing after searching for it for many years. Looking back, I can see that my search for passion was really a search for intimacy with and love for God. After all, don’t we think of those terms as connected?

## When we think of intimacy with another human being, depending on the level of intimacy, we can include reciprocal love and passion. I believe it is very similar with God, except for many it may go even deeper.

## True intimacy with God begins with drawing near to Him. We draw near to God through righteousness, obedience, reverence, and gratitude. “Come close to God and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.” James 4:8

## Jesus is the perfect example of intimacy with God because He and the Father are one. He knew He was never alone. No matter the circumstance, no matter who was around Him or how people felt about Him, Jesus was at peace, confident, and able to overcome.

## “The Father and I are one.” Jn. 10:30

## “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.” John 6:38

## There is an image the Lord has sent me that helps me gain a better understanding of the depths of intimacy with God. It is the story of Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38-42. When I think of intimacy with God, I picture Martha rushing around with a mental to do list. Then there is Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus taking in His every word. That image, combined with meditating on the Word and appropriate music in the background, can clearly lend itself to intimacy with God.

## Meditating on God’s Word is a very important way to get closer to Him. An example of meditating on God’s Word would be the story of Joseph in Genesis 37– 50. How Joseph’s story of extreme trials and tribulations over a long period of time were eventually turned into good can provide us with intense inspiration, as we use our imagination and compare a situation we may be experiencing at the moment to his journey.

## The idea is to mull the story over and over like cow chewing its cud, as we allow it to penetrate our heart which is the seat of our emotions. We can ask God questions and talk about our situation with Him. As the Lord tells us in His Word to “be still and know that I am God,“ if we settle down and quiet our mind and listen for His small, still voice He will respond through our thoughts. The more we do this, the easier it gets to know when He is “speaking.”

## Another aspect of Godly intimacy is what is called emotional intimacy. A personal example of this intimacy includes being able to pour out my heart to Him as I cry out with tears running down my cheeks. It is so special to be able to share my feelings and thoughts with the Lord who not only knows what I need, but can provide what I need to intensify my relationship with Him.

## It is also special because what I share with Him is only between the two of us and He will comfort me when I need it. To me this is the epitome of unconditional love and intimacy. It is extremely powerful especially when it becomes a regular way of relating to God. As I release many emotions a sense of peace and joy come over me.

## Remember that we can speak with Him as we would a close friend, or simply whisper to Him, and sometimes even laugh with Him (I find He has a wonderful sense of humor), as we share our innermost feelings and thoughts. As we go about our day and we continuously interact with Him, He will protect us, direct us, encourage us, shower His love on us, rebuke us, and more. I sometimes find it difficult to put into words how special and intimate this relationship can be when we make ourselves available, and put Him first in our lives whenever humanly possible.

## Intimacy with God is possible for anyone who is willing to put in the time and the commitment to developing it. I have come to realize that this concept of Godly intimacy is not as complicated or difficult as I have made it out to be for many years. It is a matter of praying to God to bring it out in us and then quieting ourselves long enough to feel it in our hearts. For many including myself, the challenging part can be having the spiritual discipline on a daily basis to put some boundaries into place to take us out of this chaotic world, and allow ourselves to be immersed in the spiritual Godly realm where God is welcoming us with open arms.

## It clearly takes self-discipline to be still in a setting where you can be alone with the Lord. Pray for that as well. You will be pleasantly surprised. As your feelings of joy and peace increase, I believe you will desire these feelings more and more and be willing to do what it takes. Once again, as God sees your intentions He will supply what you need to make it happen. He is a good and loving Father who wants what is best for his children.