

THE PATH TO INTIMACY WITH GOD

What Is Intimacy with God?

Intimacy with God is:

1. a mutual exchange of feelings and emotions,
2. **trust**,
3. respect,
4. understanding.

Intimacy with God involves:

- a. being known in ways beyond just knowing Him.
- b. A strong sense of **relationship** with God
- c. **Knowledge** of God
- d. We must seek God diligently
- e. We must seek to be led by the Holy Spirit
- f. His Love and Grace goes beyond our understanding
- g. Diligently reading, studying, meditating on His Word with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- h. It takes time to grow close to God.
- i. God and each of us are interconnected
- j. We maintain our relationship with faith in Jesus Christ.
- k. Our relationship grows as we bear good fruit.

What is the Heart of intimacy?

Scripture tells us true intimacy is found in the relationship between **God and His people**.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord—thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Jeremiah 29:11

When we intentionally foster an intimate relationship with our true God, our hearts become filled with a greater sense of peace and joy—a sign that we are on the right path to true intimacy.

8 Keys to Intimacy With God

#1 – Commitment & Faithfulness

Be fully devoted to God, Jesus, Holy Spirit. The Lord is good and his love endures forever

The Greek word for devoted literally means to “latch on and refuse to let go”. They were not religious people devoted to a religion or a church or to doing religious things.

Psalm 100:5
Deuteronomy 5:7-9 “
Revelation 2:4-5
1 Chronicles 28:9

#2 – Love For God, Jesus, Holy Spirit

Love God with all your being.

D&C 4:1b

1 Timothy 1:12-14
2 Corinthians 5:9, 14-15
Luke 9:23
Galatians 2:20
1 John 5:3
Psalm 91:14-16

#3 – Respect (Honor, Reverence)

Teach us to Pray. Hallowed be thy name.

Psalm 25:12-14
Luke 11:1-2
Acts 2:43, 47
1 Samuel 2:30

#4 – Trust & Faith

Trust in the LORD with all your heart. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Mosiah 2:10
Proverbs 3:5-6
Psalm 91:1-2
Psalm 22:4-5
Hebrews 11:6
Psalm 62:5-8

#5 – You Listen (God Speaks)

Listening to God Is The Most Important Part of Our Prayer Time With God - Our Heart Attitude Needs to Be: Speak Lord For Your Servant Is Listening

Psalm 46:10
Ecclesiastes 5:1
Luke 11:28
1 Kings 19:11-13

#6 – You Speak (Prayer)

We Need to Devote Ourselves to God And to Prayer

Acts 1:14
Acts 2:42
1 John 5:14-15
Colossians 4:2
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
Matthew 7:7

#7 – Time & Effort To Know God

If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways. God Wants to Reveal Himself & Spiritual Truth to Us

John 17:3
Luke 10:38-39
Exodus 33:13, 17-18
Luke 6:12-13
Philippians 3:8,10

#8 – Honesty

**God Wants Us to Pour Out Our Hearts to Him
God Wants to Be Involved In Your Life**

Psalm 62:8
Psalm 13:1-4
Psalm 22:1-2, 14-15

Ignite Your Intense Desire for Intimacy with GOD

When it comes to spiritual growth, desire is the primary fuel. Without it we go "nowhere fast." We need an inner craving or passion to drink deeply from God's fountain of beauty, holiness, and love. How do we get it?

■ We are Called to 'Desire' GOD

What do a screaming baby, a thirsty deer, and a Olympic sprinter have in common? They all provide active, vivid pictures of the desire that fuels our spiritual growth.

1 Peter 2:2 (IV) As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,

Psalms 42:1-2 (IV)

1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul thirsteth for to see God, for to see the living God. When shall I come and appear before thee, O God?

1 Corinthians 9:24 (IV) Know ye not that they which run in a race all run, but only one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

These word pictures portray an intense, insistent yearning for God that can't be ignored. Panting, hungering and thirsting, craving— does that describe your present relationship with your heavenly Father?

Matthew 5:8 (IV) And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost.

■ When Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), it was her desire that He immediately addressed. He invited her to thirst, not for another human relationship, but for the water of life that only He could give.

John 4:15-16 (IV)

15 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this well shall thirst again;

16 But whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

■ Jesus' invitation to quench our thirst is echoed in other voices throughout Scripture:

Isaiah 55:1 (IV) Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come; buy wine and milk without money and without price.

■ Our Lord is provider of physical and spiritual blessings.

Alma 16:119 (IV) And the Lord provided for them that they should hunger not, neither should they thirst; yea, and he also gave them strength, that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ.

Our journey with Christ is an invitation to desire. Am I hungry for God? Am I craving His Word? Do I yearn to be like Jesus? The answers to these questions are also indications of spiritual maturity.

■ Keys to Increasing Our Thirst

If desire is the fuel for spiritual growth, then we need a plan for increasing it. Scripture points us to a number of spiritual practices that can help.

1. Embrace repentance. Repentance—the act of facing and confessing our sin—is the first step toward increasing our thirst for God. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt. 4:17) were some of Jesus' first words recorded in the gospels.

Repentance does two things in us:

First, it keeps us honest about our hearts' true condition—our anemic desire for God and our deep attachment to sin.

Second, it creates a deeper thirst for God because we realize how desperately we need Him. God uses repentance to hollow us out so that He can fill us with a hunger for Him.

2. Stand in community.

Left to ourselves, our desire for God will wane and drift. Other desires will come in and choke out God's Word

Mark 4:20 (IV) And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that continue to receive, shall more be given; for he that receiveth, to him shall be given; but he that continueth not to receive, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

That's why the New Testament writers exhort us to seek God in the body of Christ.

Hebrews 3:13 (IV) But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (IV)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works,

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

As we increase our prayer and study time, God softens our hearts and reawakens a hunger for Him.

3. Become intimate with the WORD. If you aren't reading much scripture, try reading the Psalms. These "prayers of David" not only contain information about God, but they also train us in the language of desire.

Psalms 63:1 (IV) O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is,

Psalms 84:2 (IV) My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Psalms 143:6 (IV) I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land.

Can you hear the longing in these ancient, God-inspired prayers? Engaging with these Psalms will change us, molding our desires until we really do pant and thirst for God.

That's why—consider trying to read—lovingly, attentively, slowly—one psalm a day. Meditate on it and then use it as the basis for a prayer to God. If you want, try making the verse personal by changing pronouns to first person ('I' instead of 'you', etc)

4. Focus on God's goodness.

In our efforts to increase our hunger for God, most of us focus on the intensity of our desire: Do we have enough? If not, we have to try to get more. We have to pump it up. And when our desire seems to wane, we panic and fret.

1 Peter 2:2-3 (IV)

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious,

There is a connection between experiencing God's goodness and hungering for Him. Think of your all-time favorite food. When you take that first bite and the flavor hits your taste buds, you crave it more. In the same way, when we taste God's goodness—when His grace, kindness, and love intersect with our hearts—we will crave more of it.

Feelings come and go. God will remove our shallow, feeling-based desire so that He can plant in our

hearts a deeper, God given stream of desire—a bold, unquenchable prompting to keep seeking His face even when He seems absent. This desire doesn't arise from mere human effort; it is a gift from God. And it comes primarily as we take our eyes off ourselves and focus on God's goodness and grace.

We're often ashamed of our struggle to desire God as we should. Because we're ashamed, we hesitate to ask God for help. **DON'T HESITATE, ASK!**

5. Pray for Intimacy with the Father. Let your heart-felt yearning to draw him close be known. Seek God's assistance, his blessing, wisdom, strength, peace and Holy Spirit to guide you to truth.

Jesus commanded us to ask, seek, and knock
Matthew 7:12-13 (IV)

12 Say unto them, Ask of God; ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

13 For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and unto him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

This verse can be literally translated "ask and keep asking, seek and keep seeking, knock and keep knocking."

We need to keep asking—insistently and passionately—for holy desire. Why? Because God is unbelievably generous; He wants to give us good gifts.

And He has already promised to answer our requests:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 (IV)

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.

Philippians 2:13 (IV) For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We just need a **WILLING HEART** to make positive changes to our life. And a contrite spirit to ask for God's help to experience a closeness that rests on his promises. He hears our cry and will certainly answer.

hindrances to Intimacy with God

God loves you more than you know. He desires an intimate relationship with you. But, he can't be truly intimate with his children who don't know him well and won't keep his commandments. Also, obedience and trust are of primary importance for close fellowship.

1. LACK OF REPENTANCE

Psalms 66:18 (IV) If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me;

1 John 1:9 (IV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. LACK OF FAITH

James 1:6-7 (IV) But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.

Hebrews 11:6 (IV) But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

3. WILLFUL DISOBEDIENCE

1 John 3:21-23 (IV)

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 And this is his commandment: That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (IV) And he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

John 14:15 (IV) If ye love me keep my commandments.

4. HONESTY WITH GOD & OTHERS

James 5:16 (IV) Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

5. UNFORGIVENESS

Matthew 6:13 (IV) And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Ephesians 4:32 (IV) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

D&C 64:2d

2d wherefore I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another, for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses, standeth condemned before the Lord, for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

6. WRONG/SELFISH MOTIVES

James 4:3 (IV) Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

7. IDOLS IN OUR LIVES

Ezekiel 14:3 (IV) Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face. Should I be inquired of at all by them?

8. DISREGARD FOR OTHERS

John 13:34-35 (IV)

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

9. DISREGARD FOR GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

Matthew 6:9-11 (IV) 10 Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 11 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.

10. UNSURRENDERED WILL/REBELLION

Isaiah 1:5 (IV) Why should ye be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Luke 6:46 (IV) And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

11. LUST

Matthew 5:30 (IV) But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

12. COMPLAINING

Philippians 2:14-15 (IV) Do all things without murmurings and disputings, 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world,

13. IMPATIENCE WITH OTHERS

Ephesians 4:32 (IV) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (IV) Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly; comfort the feeble-minded; support the weak; be patient toward all men.

14. STRIFE

Colossians 3:9 (IV) Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds,

Philippians 2:14-15 (IV)

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings, 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world,

15. LACKING IN PRAYER

James 4:2 (IV) Ye lust and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war; yet ye have not because ye ask not.

16. BITTERNESS

Ephesians 4:31 (IV) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice;

17. UNGRATEFUL; LACK OF THANKSGIVING

Philippians 4:4 (IV) Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (IV) In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

18. LYING; LACK OF HONESTY

Proverbs 12:22 (IV) Lying lips are abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight.

Colossians 3:9-10 (IV)

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds,

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,

19. UNRESOLVED CONFLICTS

Matthew 5:25-26 (IV)

25 Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me, or if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee, 26 Leave thou thy gift before the altar, and go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. {printed: March 25, 2023}