

Intimacy

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Intimacy” is derived from the Latin word *intus*, which describes that which is most within us. From divine viewpoint, intimacy speaks of having God’s love as the most of what is in us. For a couple, intimacy is revealed by understanding one another and meeting each other’s needs, exchanging without interruption, and being sensitive to one another without selfishness. Intimacy speaks of what is really within a person—the central motivating factor toward another.

Often two people will start dating. They may find an attraction towards each other that leads to a romance. However, a romance without having gone through the Cross will never develop intimacy.

Romance without a personal cross never leads to godly intimacy. But by taking up our cross, we experience co-crucifixion, and we are free to live in amazing purity, beyond the reign

of the old sin nature. Unfortunately, in Christianity today, there tends to be a lack of godly intimacy. This is reflected in marriages that have no meaning, engagements that have no inner quality, and friendships that fail in the reality of a crisis. It is a serious problem.

In this booklet, we will look at how the Word of God and the Holy Spirit work together within us to bring true intimacy to our lives.

Chapter One

GOD'S UNCHANGING INTIMACY

Chapter seventeen in the Gospel of John shows the intimacy that existed between God the Father and God the Son during the Son's time on earth. But when Jesus cried, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46), our sins were upon Him—a reality that, for the only time in all of eternity, broke the intimacy between the Father and the Son.

Often, a man will go with a Christian girl, and he will conform to the girl's religion and to her needs—to be "acceptable" in terms of an outward appearance. But she may discover that he has no understanding about true, godly intimacy.

He Never Leaves Us

The intimacy that God enjoys with us is the most beautiful relationship in the world. Has

God ever forsaken any Christian? The answer is no (Hebrews 13:5). Has He ever failed us one time with His grace, mercy, or unconditional love? No, according to Psalm 89:33. When God comes into our hearts, He comes in to stay with intimacy, with what is the most within us.

The Son loves us so deeply that even when we grieve His Holy Spirit, He says, "I will stay. I will not leave them. I will finish the work I began in them and always remain intimate with them. They may turn from Me, but I'll not turn My back on them" (see 2 Timothy 2:13).

"Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away" (Isaiah 50:1).

God will never sell us to anyone, though we may sell ourselves with our choices. He will never divorce us. God despises divorce (Malachi 2:16). In Matthew 19:8, Jesus said that even the divorces that God allows happen because of the hardness of the hearts involved. The opposite of hardness is softness, a characteristic of intimacy.

Do not feel condemned if you are divorced. That is over, and you are going on with God as a

beautiful and precious new creation in a beautiful, godly life.

Develop a Capacity for Intimacy

In order to develop a capacity for true intimacy, a believer needs to know who he is in Christ. But, he also needs to know his potential in Adam. For example, when a couple is dating and then they break up, it becomes evident if one of them was never really intimate with Christ. Often after a break-up, one of them goes out into the world and does things Christians should never do. Why? Because they have no capacity for intimacy with God.

Before a couple enters into marriage, they should recognize who they are in Adam and go after God and His Word, so that with God's provision they can overcome their weaknesses. Then, they should ask, "Who am I in Christ? Am I intimate with Christ, who is reigning in me?"

Chapter Two

THE CONCEPT OF THE CROSS

“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

“Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:7-8, 15).

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:16-17).

If there is one thing I want it is intimacy with God—I want Him to be the person who is most within me. I want my life to glorify Him.

Intimacy with God is the most precious thing we can have. I have heard a preacher say, “Sickness is your cross; marriage is your cross.” Well, those things might be *his* cross, but that is not my cross. My cross is nothing unless I understand *His* Cross. Christ’s Cross includes His dying for me and dying as me. His Cross includes His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. I was crucified, buried, and raised with Him.

The Cross is this: I accept my co-crucifixion daily, I accept my burial daily, and I accept my spiritual resurrection daily (Romans 6:11). I accept my death daily. I accept my brand-new life daily. When I do this by the grace of God, I am practicing intimacy. When I am filled with the Holy Spirit, using rebound when I do fail, I am practicing intimacy (Ephesians 5:18).

Intimacy in the Home

Intimacy in marriage is a tremendous thing. Your partner should be nourished, cherished, and deeply, deeply loved. Couples should develop intimacy in every way. Maybe they enjoy candlelight dinners at home or visits to a special

restaurant. Maybe they hold hands and take long walks.

Some couples have told me that they enjoy intimacy best during a worship service at church, as they raise their hands to praise God. They say they feel so clean, so right, and so good about their marriage when they sing together or sit together to hear a message. They are practicing intimacy.

Others enter into mental intimacy when they sit down and build each other up. They share their heartaches—not complaining, but in an honest exchange. There is no blaming going on. That is mental intimacy.

Then, there is emotional intimacy. The husband gets excited about something, and the wife loves him so much that she gets excited, too.

Physical Fulfillment

Finally, there is physical intimacy. Sex is such a sacred part of marriage. It should be cherished and nourished. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Sex should be a physical exchange of an expression of love that the couple shares with no one else. Sex is something God ordained for our pleasure as well as for the procreation of the human race.

This is all part of a fantastic intimacy that develops when the husband loves his wife by taking up his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. He loves her, and she respects him (Ephesians 5:33). She submits through honor, not as a doormat or a slave (Ephesians 5:22-24).

When we are intimate with God, it is so easy to be intimate with each other. If one party in a marriage doesn't have the capacity for intimacy, then the Word of God takes over. Each of us has a treasure in his earthen vessel that the excellency of power may be of God, and not of us (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Chapter Three

REVEAL THE TREASURE WITHIN

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

“Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

“For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (2 Corinthians 4: 8-11).

Deep within us, the Holy Spirit wants to develop meekness. Meekness is accepting God-consciousness as the norm and standard we live by within the deepest part of our being—what is most within us. Meekness is to establish God’s standard within. God’s standard was to die for me when I was a sinner, and then to wait and wait until I came to Him to be saved. Through

the Holy Spirit and through God's fullness (*pleroma*) (Ephesians 3:19), His standard becomes the basis for having godly intimacy toward people.

When we are intimate with God, we may be troubled on every side, but we are not in despair. We may be persecuted, but we are not forsaken. We may get knocked down, but we are never knocked out. In every friendship, in every marriage, we are to bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus and let His eternal life be revealed and manifested through our mortal bodies.

We who are alive are always delivered unto death. This means we are to take up our death, burial, and resurrection daily by the grace of God and through the filling of the Spirit. We have been delivered to the Cross to reveal the treasure that is within us: Jesus Christ.

Death that Works Life

"For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

"So then death worketh in us, but life in you" (2 Corinthians 4:11-12).

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, saying,

“Death works in me so that God’s life can start working in all of you.” He had true intimacy with Christ, therefore he could love the Corinthians unconditionally—“until death do us part.” The apostle desired to share his treasure without forcing anything upon them.

Paul encouraged all the members of the Corinthian church to be of the same spirit of faith so that they, too, could be delivered unto death. Even if another party didn’t have a capacity for intimacy, the treasure within could still be revealed.

A Consciousness of Grace

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:1-2).

According to Galatians 6:1-2, the one who is spiritual is to go in a spirit of meekness to the one who has a fault. That is what it means to have *God’s* consciousness of grace and mercy, God’s consciousness of forgiveness, God’s consciousness of just loving until it works. We may fail, but God’s love never fails. And if we have

His mind in us and we operate in God's spirituality, then we can bear the burden, and we can bear the weakness of the person who cannot be intimate with us.

The people we go to may disagree, and they may not like what we have to say. But as God's men and women in God's place, with God's truth, we choose to do things God's way, with God's life. When God is the strength of our lives, nothing anyone can say will change our intimacy with Him.

What is most within us is that which comes out of us. We share it in our friendships. We share it with our families. We share it in marriages. We share it with each other over and over again. This is intimacy.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps you believe that you are married to someone with whom you cannot have godly intimacy. That is no reason to quit. Instead of leaving, God has a plan to change people.

That is the Bible at work. Every time there is a question, God's Word has the answer.

As Christians, let's choose to put off the old man and the old corrupt conversation. Let's be renewed in the spirit of our minds and put on the new man. That is true holiness.

In the name of Jesus Christ, stop fooling around with separations and divorces. Do not begin a process of alienation from having intimacy with God. Put on the whole armor of God, and stand in the power of His might. Go forward with godly intimacy in Christ and let the treasure be revealed.

Choose to glorify God in the short time that we are on earth. As we are pure and clean and go forward, we will reveal Christ. Everyone will

know that we live in a mystery—the mystery of true intimacy with Him.