

## Understanding the Signs of the Times – Week 5

### Matthew 25:12

<sup>12</sup> But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

**Matthew 7:21-23** is strikingly similar to the end of the parable where He warns “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.** On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘**I never knew you; depart from me,** you workers of lawlessness.’”

**Believers can be saved and on their way to heaven yet **relationally distant from the Lord.****

- What does it mean to be “intimate”?
- What does it mean to be intimate with God?
- What does it mean to have a “relationship with God”?
- How do you get to know Almighty God?

What does it mean to:

- Commune with God
- Fellowship with God
- Seek God
  
- What is Prayer?
- What is Praise? What is Worship?

## The Heart of Intimacy

### "In-to-Me-See"

- Intimacy is what we call the experience of really knowing and being known by another person.
- **We cannot be intimate with a person we don't trust.**
- Trust is at the heart of intimacy. The more we trust someone, the *closer* we let them get to us. The degree to which trust is compromised in a relationship is the degree to which intimacy evaporates.

## The Heart of Intimacy with God

- The first step to developing an intimate (and fulfilling) love relationship with God is to admit that the abundant life He promises will never be found in another person - Instead, it's found in Christ alone.
- Some things with God are so personal, so intimate, that they cannot be described with words, they can only be felt with the heart. This is how true intimacy with God is; we feel that no one else can really understand the special bond that we share with Him because it's altogether personal.
- Scripture shows us that God is intimate with those who trust him. **The more we trust God, the more intimately we come to know him.**

## Intimacy Is More Than Knowledge

- “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.” (John 5:39–40)
- Biblical knowledge is far better than gold when it fuels **our trust in God, because it fuels our intimacy with God** (Psalm 19:10).
- But when biblical knowledge replaces our trust in God, it **only fuels our pride** (1 Corinthians 8:1).

## How We Draw Near to God

**God is impressed with our faith, not our works.**

**Hebrews 11:6 New Living Translation (NLT)** “And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.”

## God’s Invitation to Intimacy

- God wants intimacy with you. Christ has done all the hard work in the cross to make it possible. All he requires is that you believe in him (John 14:1). **He wants you to trust him with all your heart** (Proverbs 3:5).

## What Intimacy Looks Like

To help us comprehend what closeness with the Lord looks like, let's examine the writings of David, whom the Bible calls a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). Psalm 63:1-8 gives a vivid description of His overwhelming and consuming passion for His Lord.

### **Psalm 63:1-8 New Living Translation (NLT)**

#### Psalm 63

*A psalm of David, regarding a time when David was in the wilderness of Judah.*

- <sup>1</sup> O God, you are my God;  
I earnestly search for you.  
My soul thirsts for you;  
my whole body longs for you  
in this parched and weary land  
where there is no water.
- <sup>2</sup> I have seen you in your sanctuary  
and gazed upon your power and glory.
- <sup>3</sup> Your unfailing love is better than life itself;  
how I praise you!
- <sup>4</sup> I will praise you as long as I live,  
lifting up my hands to you in prayer.
- <sup>5</sup> You satisfy me more than the richest feast.  
I will praise you with songs of joy.
- <sup>6</sup> I lie awake thinking of you,  
meditating on you through the night.
- <sup>7</sup> Because you are my helper,  
I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings.
- <sup>8</sup> I cling to you;  
your strong right hand holds me securely.

## Prayer – two-way conversation with God

When you pray, God doesn't want you to pretend to be something that you are not. He just wants you to tell Him what is on your heart and mind, just as you would with a trusted friend (1 Peter 5:6-8). As you pray, you will learn how to hear God's voice, just as Jesus says those who know Him do (John 10:27-29).

### The Challenge of Successful Prayer

- Create the right atmosphere for quality time with the Lord
- Settle your soul – it takes time to arrest the activity in your soul. You may have to wait a while so that you can connect with God spirit to spirit – without distractions
- When you are aware of His presence talk, fellowship, commune – pour your heart out to God - and don't forget to listen
- Fear may cause hesitation
- Remember that just as developing intimacy with another person takes time, so it is with relationship with God. **BE PATIENT**, but **PERSISTENT**. As you grow to trust Him and believe what He says in His Word more and more, your love affair with Him will become increasingly fulfilling and the abundance of *life* will grow inside your spirit and soul.

Try interacting with the Lord by praying as you read Scripture. Meditate on His words and ask Him questions: "What are You saying to me? How does this apply to my life?" Then be still and listen, The more you listen, the more you'll hear His voice, and soon your time with Him will become your greatest joy and delight!

## Next week 6 – Last Class - Certificates

## We explore deeper into Prayer and Praise & Worship