

# God Desires Intimacy with Us

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## Christ Calls the Church His Bride

- Throughout the Scriptures, the church is talked about as the Bride of Christ.
  - Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7-9, 21:2
- What that shows about God's relationship with us and His desire for us:
  - God purposefully designed marriage to be the most intimate of human relationships
    - There isn't a single type of human relationship that is more intimate than a marriage
  - To really get the full meaning of this analogy, we have to go back to the prototypical marriage
    - Genesis 2:18-25
    - God purposefully waited so that He could make it painfully obvious that He had made Eve for Intimacy with Adam.
    - The idea that God made a wife for man for the purpose of intimacy is set forth in Genesis as part of the biblical paradigm of marriage.
    - So when God says that we are His bride, there is no way He can say that without implying that we were made for intimacy with Him.

## God Calls Us His Children

- The Scriptures also frequently talk about God as our Father who has adopted us as children.
  - Ephesians 1:5; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1
- Fathers affectionately desire to have connection with their children
  - Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6
  - God gave us spirit crying out "Abba! Father!"
    - This shows that God by the Holy Spirit gives us the desire to have an affectionate relationship with Him. And any desire that God wants us to have, He wants us to have because He desires it. Because God wants our desires to be for what He desires.
  - Jeremiah 31:20
    - This verse shows that God isn't a distant or emotionally absent father; He longs for us. He strongly passionately desires for us to be with Him and Him with us.
- But God doesn't use this analogy in order just to say that His relationship with us is like that of earthly fathers with their children. (that's part of it, but that's not the big picture)
  - The more significant reason is to show that His relationship with us is meant to be like His relationship with God the Son! (John 20:17, 17:22-23; Romans 8:29)
  - God the Father says that our relationship with Him is meant to be like His relationship with Jesus, and that is an intimate relationship.
  - Before the creation of the world and of time, God had always had intimacy within Himself. The Father had intimacy with the Son and the Son with the Father
    - But us having a relationship with the Father like Jesus' relationship with the Father means that we have been invited into that very intimacy.

## Jesus Was Close with His Disciples

- How Jesus related to the disciples shows His desire for closeness with His people (John 13:23, 15:13-15)

## The Example of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42)

- It's not merely that Martha would have been missing out on the Word of God. She could have just finished preparing dinner and then read the Scriptures afterwards.
  - It wasn't just information that she was missing out on, it was fellowship with Jesus.
  - Mary could have just relayed what Jesus was teaching, but she would have missed out on the fellowship.
  - It wasn't just that Mary chose Jesus' teaching, it's that she chose Jesus' fellowship.

## God Wants Us to Know Him and See His Glory (Hosea 6:6; John 17:24)

- God desires that we know Him as a part of His desire that we glorify Him
  - Knowing God deeply enables us to praise Him deeply
    - If I didn't know Theresa very well, if our relationship was shallow and we didn't ever spend much time together, then I wouldn't be able to praise her very deeply.
    - I could say that she's a great wife, but could I even really mean it that much? Me praising her for being a great wife isn't very meaningful if I don't actually know her as a great wife.
    - The more I know her as a great wife, the more meaningful and heartfelt and real my praise of her is.
    - God doesn't want shallow meaningless praise (Matthew 15:7-9)
    - God wants us to know His glory, enjoy His glory, and give Him heartfelt worship and praise because we see and know and enjoy His glory.
    - And we get to see God's greatness the deepest through knowing Him intimately.

## God Has Deeper Enjoyment of His Own Glory Through Intimacy with Us

- 1. God the Father delights in the glory of God in the Son
  - God the Father sees all His glory in God the Son (Hebrews 1:3a)
  - The Father has always had great delight in Jesus (Matthew 3:17; Isaiah 42:1)
  - Part of the Father's delight in the Son is His enjoyment of the Son's glory
- 2. Not only does God the Father delight in His glory in the Son, but He gets a deeper enjoyment of that glory because of how close their relationship is.
  - Just like we enjoy God's glory more when we know Him closely (with more relational closeness), I think God the Father has a deeper enjoyment of His glory in God the Son, because their relationship is an intimate one. I can't imagine their enjoyment of their glory in each other would be the same if they were relationally distant from each other.
- 3. God made us to reflect His glory, and He delights in His glory in us (Psalms 19:1)
  - God delights in seeing His glory in us and that's a big part of why He made us in His image
- 4. God gets a greater and deeper enjoyment of His glory in us when He is close to us
  - Even though God knows us perfectly (that is He knows everything there is to know about us) He can still know us within intimacy or know us from afar (Psalm 138:6) God knows everything there is to know about the proud, but He distances Himself relationally from them We see similar language used in 1 Corinthians 8:3. But God is all-knowing, so this must be talking about a type of relational knowing. A type of relational closeness.
    - So, God gets a deeper delight in us from being intimate with us, and that delight is still a delight in His glory!
  - This means that nothing can ever make you not desirable before God because the thing that makes Him desire intimacy with you is the fact that you are made in His image, and nothing can ever undo that or take it away.