

John 3:16. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

In war torn parts of the world, it is not uncommon for children to be the victims. Abandoned, lost and maimed, children wander aimlessly, looking for their families--forsaken and broken. Fathers and mothers wail inconsolably, searching in the rubble, praying for their children to be safe. Some children die--never found--never rescued.

Today, we are in the ultimate battle between sin and purity, darkness and light, good and evil. Without God, we may wander aimlessly, broken and scarred, afraid of death, looking for a safe haven. Without God, we may die alone and never found. But Jesus, the very Son of God, brought hope and peace to the world through his teaching and ultimately His death on the cross. He brought us the good news that we are God’s adopted children. Our Heavenly Father searches for us and removes the brokenness of our souls, our sins, our scars, and our hopelessness. Through Him, we are pure and sanctified. We are safe. Through Him, we have eternal life.

It takes time to develop relationships, whether these relationships are with our children, neighbors, husbands, wives, family members or colleagues. When you were dating, you did not marry the first person you met, nor did you establish friendships after only spending a little time together. Deep personal relationships require an investment of time, common experience and common interest.

The same is true of our relationship with God. It takes an investment of time for us to get to know who He is and how to interact with Him. To

begin with, there are some basic things that are “givens.”

- A. God chose us to be members of His family. He first chose us. He wants a relationship with us.
- B. God loves us. John 3:16 demonstrate that love. The whole Bible is about God’s love.
- C. God will do any thing that is good for us. He will always answer prayer.
- D. God demonstrates His grace day after day.
- E. God forgives us of our sins.

F. God knows us better than we know ourselves. You cannot hide from God.

the first step is for us to have a personal spirit by accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. After the spirit has been born within us we can now relate to God. In addition, Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit to indwell in us and to help us relate to God. Without the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit, we would find establishing a relationship with God very difficult if not impossible.

However, in establishing a relationship with us, God goes one-step further, His relationship is established on a spiritual basis, which means that it is eternal. In order to really relate to God we must relate to Him in spirit. Our spirit must interact with His Spirit. Of course, this means that

1. Read John 4:24. "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
2. Read John 14:16-18. "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; /that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. / I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."
3. There are many times when we exhort our children to play and establish relationships with people of like minds. We don't want our children to run around with the wrong crowd. We don't want them using foul language, taking drugs, drinking alcohol and showing disrespect to others. In other words, we want them to seek out and become good people by having a desire to model themselves after Christian role models. In order to have a relationship with God, **we must be willing to change**. We must dedicate our lives to this relationship (between us and God).

3.1. Read Romans 12:1 _____

3.2. Read Romans 6:13 *"and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."*

4. The next thing we must do is to **separate ourselves from the world**. We cannot be children of God on our own terms. Another way to put it; if you want to be friends with



God you must be friends 7x24, that's 7 days a week, 24 hours per day. God does not want us to put Him on the shelf 6 days a week and pull him off the shelf on Sundays.

4.1. Read Romans 12:2 _____

5. Lastly, we must work to transform our lives. This is a continual process that we cannot do alone and we must have the help of the Holy Spirit. Where does this transformation take place? Is it in our bodies, or our soul, or our spirit? The answer is in the intellect of our soul. Our minds must be continually transformed, developed to turn from the ways of the world and toward the ways of God.

5.1. Read Romans 8:1-6. The theme of this chapter in Romans is living life in the spirit. _____

6. As we transform our minds and begin to work on moving from the world and toward God, we can ask the Holy Spirit for help in teaching us how to accomplish this transformation.

6.1. Read 1 Corinthians 2:13 _____

6.2. **The life of the Christian is different from the unbeliever.** Christian life has a unique God given character of its own. Our transformation separates us. Read 2 Corinthians 10:12. *“For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.”*

7. **In establishing relationships with other people, it is necessary for us to have common experiences and lots of conversation.** Without conversation it is difficult to



know someone. God also wants to have conversations with us. This is done primarily through prayer.

7.1. Read 1 Corinthians 14:15 _____

7.2. Prayer is not just a time for us to ask God for something, it is also a time for us to simply talk with God. In 1 Thessalonians 5:16, Paul says Rejoice always; followed by 1 Thessalonians 5:17. _____

8. In a familiar Christian poem “**Footprints**” a man looks back over his life and he sees his life and his walk with Christ. There are times when there are two set of footprints and other times when there is only one set of footprints. During the times that there is only one set of footprints, the most difficult times of the man’s life occurred. He asks Jesus, “Why was their only one set of footprints during my most difficult times? Why did you leave me when I needed you the most?” Jesus answered, “Those are not your footprints...those were the times when I carried you.” God always wants us to walk with Him. Read Galatians 5:16. _____

9. In order to help us understand our relationship with God the Father, read the story of the prodigal son. This is found in Luke 15:11-24. *“And He said, “A man had two sons. / The younger of them said to his father, “Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them. /And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. /Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. /So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. /And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. /But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough*



bread, but I am dying here with hunger!’ /I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; /I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.’ /So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. /And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ /But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; /and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; /for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.”

What does this story mean to you? The father in the story is God our father. _____

10. In Bob George’s book, ***Growing In Grace***, he states in the chapter Food for Growth “First, read the Bible; in order to get to know Christ, not just to learn Bible facts. We have been called to a relationship. Jesus said, ‘Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent’ (John 17:3). Paul wrote, ‘I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord’ (Philippians 3:8). Don’t make the same mistake I did later, when I strayed from my personal relationship with Christ into dry knowledge and barren service. Don’t get on that terrible treadmill of the ‘search for something more.’ Don’t fall for the deception of believing that we start out with Christ, then ‘graduate’ to the “deep things” of God. Jesus Christ is everything. There is nothing “deeper” than knowing Him intimately! That is what we will do throughout eternity – discover and enjoy the wonders of Him. We’ll never get to the end of all that He is.”

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 *“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! / And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. /And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. /You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. /You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. / You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”*

10.1. Record your thoughts. _____

10.2. Do you write them on your doorpost? _____

Jesus said in Revelation 3:20 that **He will dine with us**. This is a wonderful invitation.

During the week read/sing the following song as a reminder of this lesson.

Change My Heart O God - Eddie Espinosa

Change my heart O God, make it ever true, change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

You are the Potter, I am the clay, mold me and make me this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true, change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

