



## BE RESTORED-WEEK 2

### Your Heart's Desire-Created for Intimacy

*“But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8 (CSB)*

Do you know God wants a personal relationship with you? He desires to connect intimately with you as his child. You are not one of many. You are not lost in the crowd. His eye is upon you. His ear is attentive to you. His heart is for you. He longs for you to know how loved and valued you are by him, so much so that he sent his only son to reconcile you to himself.

Sadly, many of us see ourselves as irrelevant to God, as though if we suddenly disappeared, he would not take notice of our absence. In a sea of billions upon billions of faces, we feel we are but a speck of sand at the bottom of the ocean.

These limiting beliefs negatively impact our faith when we falsely assume God doesn't care about us or what we do with our lives. They leave us feeling stuck, overwhelmed, and discouraged, unable to move forward in Gods' purpose for us.

This week, we will look at the relationship God desires to have with his children. As you work through the lesson, ask the Lord to expose any hidden hurts or hang-ups that are hindering your intimacy with him. Prayerfully, ask the Lord to search the deep spaces of you heart and reveal areas in need of healing and restoration.

Read aloud Psalms 63:1-8 (CSB). As you do, fill in the blanks below.

*“God, you are my God; I eagerly \_\_\_\_\_ you. I \_\_\_\_\_ for you; my body \_\_\_\_\_ for you in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water. So I \_\_\_\_\_ on you in the sanctuary to \_\_\_\_\_ your strength and your glory. My lips will \_\_\_\_\_ you because your faithful love is better than life. So I will \_\_\_\_\_ you as long as I live; at your name, I will \_\_\_\_\_ up my hands. You \_\_\_\_\_ me as with rich food; my mouth will \_\_\_\_\_ you with joyful lips. When I \_\_\_\_\_ of you as I lie on my bed, I \_\_\_\_\_ on you during the night watches because you are my helper; I will \_\_\_\_\_ in the shadow of your wings. I \_\_\_\_\_ close to you; your right hand holds on to me.”*

As you reflect on these verses, answer the following questions.

How would you describe David's relationship with the Lord? Was it close and intimate or distant and impersonal? Explain.

How would you describe your relationship with the Lord at this moment? Are you feeling close to Him or distant? Describe.

(If you answered the latter, it's okay! That's what we are here for, to allow God to draw us back to Him, back to a heart of worship.)

When you hear the word *intimacy*, what do you think of? You might think it refers solely to a sexual relationship. To clarify its meaning, let's look at its definition.

Dictionary.com defines *intimacy* as "the state of being intimate," "a close, familiar, and usually affectionate or loving personal relationship with another person or group," "an act or expression serving as a token of familiarity, affection, or the like," "sexual intercourse," "the quality of being comfortable, warm, or familiar."

In your own words, write the meaning of the word "intimacy".

The word "intimacy" is not found in most Bible translations. To better understand its biblical meaning, read the following verses in the versions listed. Note the relationship represented in each verse. (To dig deeper, read these verses in the Bible version of your choice to compare translations).

*1 John 2:5-6 (The Passion Translation) "But the love of God will be perfected within the one who obeys God's Word. We can be sure that we've truly come to live in intimacy with God, not just by saying, "I am intimate with God," but by walking in the footsteps of Jesus."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*Job 29:4 (New International Version) "Oh, for the days when I was in my prime, when God's intimate friendship blessed my house."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*1 John 4:16 (The Passion Translation) "We have come into an intimate experience with God's love, and we trust in the love he has for us. God is love! Those who are living in love are living in God, and God lives through them."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*Job 19:14 (The Amplified Version) "My relatives have failed [me], intimate friends have forgotten me."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*Genesis 4:1 (Christian Standard Bible) "The man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I have had a male child with the Lord's help."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*John 1:18 (Amplified Version) "No one has seen God [His essence, His divine nature] at any time; the [One and] only begotten God [that is, the unique Son] who is in the intimate presence of the Father, he has explained Him [and interpreted and revealed the awesome wonder of the Father]."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*Ephesians 4:30 (The Message Version) "Don't grieve God. Don't break his heart. His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for himself. Don't take such a gift for granted."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

*2 Corinthians 13:14 (The Message Version) "The amazing grace of the Master, Jesus Christ, the extravagant love of God, the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit, be with all of you."*

Relationship represented: \_\_\_\_\_

After reading these verses, how has your understanding of the word intimate changed?

If you also read these verses in your regular Bible translation, did they help deepen your understanding of its definition? If so, how?

How would you compare an intimate relationship according to the world's standards with the holy intimacy the Lord desires to have with his children?

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Have you been in a relationship that just seems to flow easily? Communication and trust come so naturally, it seems almost effortless. You look forward to being together because this is the one person on Planet Earth who “gets you.” Don’t you wish all relationships were wired that way?

Then there are the ones that are painstakingly difficult to maintain. It’s stressful trying to have a conversation when relationships are strained. Doing so risks leading to one misunderstanding after another. I’ve had both kinds of relationships in my lifetime, and I admit the older I get, I treasure the ones that come naturally.

God created us to have an unstrained, intimate relationship with Him, characterized by trust and open communication. All too often, unlike David, we limit our conversations to formal greetings and simple pleasantries. While we desire a deep and abiding relationship with our Lord, it may feel distant and hollow. Like attending an event with a room full of strangers, our prayer time might be spent looking for the nearest exit. If we don’t know the Lord intimately, misunderstanding His character may lead to it staying that way.

Review the graph below. How do you rate your intimacy level with the Lord? Circle or Check your answer.



Explain why you gave your relationship with the Lord this rating.

[Empty text box for explaining the rating]

If you want to draw closer to him, what needs to change first? If you're not sure, stop and pray, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal any obstacles you may not be aware of.

[Empty text box for describing what needs to change]

If your relationship with the Lord is close right now, great! For others, you may feel God is far off or even out of reach. For most, you will probably land somewhere in middle. You may be feeling as though you will never be as intimate with God as others because they somehow are more spiritually in-tune than you are. Do not fall for that lie from the enemy. God is not holding out on you. As we move forward in our study, you will soon be restored to greater intimacy with the Father as your heart learns to connect with him on a deeper level.



# Created for Intimacy

During creation God designed us for intimacy with Him and with each other. Being made in the image of God, humans are social beings. Let's go back to the beginning, to the Garden of Eden, so we can better understand the intimacy the Lord had planned for us, His creation.

Read Genesis 1:1-31 (CSB). Write Genesis 1:1 below.

The story of creation is awe-inspiring. The heavens, the earth, the sky, the sun, the plants, the animals, the fish...God created everything. Then, he made his ultimate creation.

*"Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female."  
Genesis 1:26-27*

Here we see the same God who created the animals creating man and woman. In what ways were they unique to the rest of his created beings?

**The Name of God in Creation:** The Hebrew word used for God in these verses is *Elohim*. Grammatically, it is a noun that is a plural word being used in a singular form. You may recognize it in the short form *EL* like in the name *El-Shaddai, God Almighty*. Although we do not know its exact meaning, it denotes the idea of **strength and power**. Who was this *"us"* who was present at creation, who so beautifully formed our earth and sea and skies? Who was this *Elohim* who said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness?" Let's get to know our Creator.

Read the following verses. Circle or Highlight any names, nouns, or pronouns referring to or describing God.

*Isaiah 64:8 (CSB) – "Yet Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hands."*

*Colossians 1:15-16 (CSB) - "He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him."*

*Job 33:4 (CSB) – "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."*

According to these verses and those in Genesis, who was present at the creation?

Can you see each person of the Trinity's hand in creation? How?

Written into creation's story is a synergistic symphony, beautifully demonstrated in the relationship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Trinity, the Three-In-One, each present as the universe, the earth, and its inhabitants were brought into being.

Here, we observe the first intimate relationship in the Bible. Not one person in the Godhead is above the other. Nor do they work independently of each other, because they are One. He is One. This is the God of creation introducing Himself to us, so we know Him in his completeness. What we will soon come to realize is that God wants us to know Him more intimately than we can imagine. Let's dig deeper into why we struggle with intimacy with our Creator.





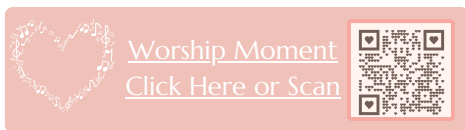
Thought to Ponder: I know what hinders my intimacy with the Lord and how I can improve it.

YES  NO  UNSURE

We discussed earlier possible hinderances to growing in intimacy with the Lord. Take a look at the list below, and check any that are negatively impacting your intimacy with the Lord.

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|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unconfessed Sin     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Faith      | <input type="checkbox"/> Disobedience        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Forgiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Selfishness        | <input type="checkbox"/> Rebellion           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lust                | <input type="checkbox"/> Bitterness         | <input type="checkbox"/> Complaining         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Envy               | <input type="checkbox"/> Fearfulness         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strife              | <input type="checkbox"/> No Prayer Life     | <input type="checkbox"/> No Bible Study      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ungrateful          | <input type="checkbox"/> Lying/Believe Lies | <input type="checkbox"/> Unresolved Conflict |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distractions        | <input type="checkbox"/> Trauma             | <input type="checkbox"/> Guilt/Shame         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Busyness            | <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Interests     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not Surrendered     | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of Interest   | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling Unworthy    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> False Beliefs       | <input type="checkbox"/> Anger              | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrong View of God   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pride/Unbelief      | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor Self-Image    | <input type="checkbox"/> No Faith Community  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Criticism           | <input type="checkbox"/> Judgemental        | <input type="checkbox"/> Gossip              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Hinderances:  |   |  |

Confess these to the Lord. Ask his forgiveness and to give you an open heart, ready to receive all he has for you. Write your prayer here.



- If you are in a painful season, how can a deeper intimacy with the Lord help you better understand his purpose in your pain?

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- How can cultivating intimacy with God help you discover and understand his purpose for your life?

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- What actions will you take this week to grow deeper in intimacy with Jesus? (Some ideas are listed below.)

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\_\_\_\_\_

My Intimacy with God Plan - Personal
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily bible study and prayer time
<input type="checkbox"/> Confession and repentance of sin
<input type="checkbox"/> Worship and praise music
<input type="checkbox"/> Scripture memorization
<input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude jar and prayer journal
<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____

My Intimacy with God Plan - Community
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend church weekly
<input type="checkbox"/> Pray to boldly share the gospel
<input type="checkbox"/> Commit to serve others
<input type="checkbox"/> Learn to exercise spiritual gifts
<input type="checkbox"/> Accountable to other believers
<input type="checkbox"/> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> _____

# Additional Notes

*"Let's strive to know the LORD. His appearance is as sure as the dawn. He will come to us like the rain, like the spring showers that water the land."*

*Hosea 6:3 CSB*