

Living With God

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As Christians we all get it into our minds that everything we do is for someone else or for ourselves. God designed us as His chosen children, to not only love us but to walk with us, talk with us, hear our words and answer our questions. While we go about our lives we tend to forget that God is always there as any father would want to be. We just have to let Him join us on our journey; let Him into our daily lives.

Living 'With' God

DAY ONE - Are you living 'WITH' God, or are you living 'FOR' God?

Philippians 2:1-3 (ESV) Christ's Example of Humility *So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

We all do things for each other; we do things for our friends, family, wives, husbands, church, etc. It often feels like that's all we do sometimes is do, do, do, for others. Sometimes that is true!

If we are 'living for' God, then we are on a path of weariness and cannot be sustained over a long period of time. I read something that I think puts this in perspective quite well. If we are only living 'for' God, we are looking at Him and placing ourselves in the position of a mere servant. Now, you ask, isn't that our role? Isn't that what scripture says, to serve others, to love others before ourselves, to put off selfishness. You would be correct kind of. However, 'if' in your heart and in your soul and in your mind, you are only doing things 'for' someone else, or 'for' God, or 'for' the church, or 'for' your family, you have forgotten a small part of that all inclusive gift you received 'from' God that 'lives' inside of you.

When you clean the house, do the dishes, wash the car, do the laundry, or fix a meal, is it better to do it alone, or is it easier if you have help? If instead of taking turns to 'do' the dishes, you take turns for 'who' washes and 'who' dries! Who cooks the eggs and who bakes the biscuits. Who gathers the laundry and puts it in the washer and who dries and folds it when it's done? If we can do things together we accomplish several things. We spend more time together, we can communicate longer and better, we share more together and our rewards (blessings) are together.

Become involved in the lives of those who love us! Sharing everything and be non-typical according to the world, enjoying our relationship instead of feeling guilty or alone or overwhelmed. Treat your relationship with God the same way; include God in 'everything'! If we keep doing typical things, we will keep getting only typical results.

2 Timothy 1:14 (NIV) ¹⁴ *Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*

When you get up in the morning is God there? When you drive your kids to school, is God there? When you fix dinner at night, or go to a movie or out to eat, is God there? When you drink coffee in the morning, is God there? My point is this; GOD is "ALWAYS THERE"! We spend so much time trying to do the 'for' part, when in reality; GOD is waiting on you to 'invite' Him to join in what it is you are doing or what you and your family and friends might be doing. Since, God is our Father, we are his children, guess what; we are ALL in God's family.

God is our heavenly Father, Abba (daddy) Father! Scripture says the Spirit who calls out, Abba Father!

Galatians 4:6-7 (NIV) ⁶ Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba Father.”⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

IF, God has made you also an heir, doesn’t that mean as His child, in whatever you do, wherever you go, God would ‘want’ to be there?

I understand you might think this is more of a mindset adjustment, but it is more than that, it is life changing. Because we are not aligning our heart and mind with the Spirit He placed inside of us.

1 John 2:27-29 (ESV) ²⁷ But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in him.

1. What can I do to include God in all aspects of my life!

2. How do I perceive God in regards to my life?

Romans 8:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba”, Father.”

Living 'With' God

DAY TWO – LIVING AS SINNERS

We keep looking at ourselves as (and often greet each other) as sinners, spending wasted time trying to figure out what it is that 'we' think God would have us do today. Stop looking at yourself as a sinner, but as a person 'freed' from our sin by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit scripture says, "teaches us about everything, and is true, and is no lie"!

Ecclesiastes 7:14-15 (NIV) ¹⁴ *When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, no one can discover anything about their future.* ¹⁵ *In this meaningless (vain) life of mine I have seen both of these: the righteous perishing in their righteousness, and the wicked living long in their wickedness. (*Vain- Ecclesiastes 7:15 The Hebrew term *hebel* can refer to a "vapor" or "mere breath")*

Stop treating God as the bank where you draw out His saving grace every time you mess up or make a mistake and need God to bail you out, as a teenager comes to their parents needing money for a date!

Come to Him, yes, as a child, but humbly, in reverence, seeking not only a ladder to lift us out of the pit we've dug for ourselves, but for His forgiveness and understanding, and guidance to move on. How many times, (if you have teenage kids) did you feel like a banker? How many times have you heard someone say, "those kids must think money grows on trees!"?

That is how we treat God in many situations, without a care in the world because we know He is there and will save us. We take God for granted, we abuse our salvation, and we depend on grace and mercy like it 'grows on trees'. *"So walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and 'established' in 'the' faith"*.

Colossians 2:6-8 (ESV) *'Alive in Christ'* ⁶ *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,* ⁷ *rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

God, Abba Father, desires us, pursues us, loves us, disciplines us, let his own Son in the flesh, be mocked, ridiculed, flogged, crucified, stabbed and died in the flesh to save us. Is it that hard a leap, to see the unbelievable amount of Love and compassion God has for little old you? If God was willing to let Jesus die on the cross to be raised again, to send His Spirit to 'live' inside of you, to dwell in you permanently, then why would God NOT want to be included in your daily life?

Romans 8:10-12 (NIV) ¹⁰ *But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.* ¹¹ *And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.* ¹² *Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it.*

“But ‘if’ Christ is in you”! That is a real important part of being able to live ‘with’ God on a daily basis. If you still have feelings of doubt in your faith and trust in Jesus Christ to bring you out of sin and into the living Kingdom of God, which is IN you, it is time to sit down, and talk to Jesus one on one.

Realize the Power of God, in your life, the real, unbelievable and absolute power of God, that knew you before you were even conceived and knows the number of the hairs on your head. If God is in us, living inside of us through the Holy Spirit, then just as the disciples of Jesus Christ had the power given to them by God, we have the power given to us according to God’s will IN US TODAY AT THIS VERY MOMENT!

Ephesians 3:17-19 (ESV) **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19** and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1. How do I treat God?

2. How do I perceive the Holy Spirit in regards to my life?

1 John 2:28 (ESV) Children of God- ²⁸ *And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming*

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DAY THREE – FAMILIES DO THINGS TOGETHER

John 15 (NIV) The Vine and the Branches *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes (cleans) so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

⁵ *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

⁶ *If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.*

⁷ *If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.* ⁸ *This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

God is Living in You! God Cares about You! God Loves You!

WE are all disciples for Christ Jesus, if we have accepted Him as our Lord and Savior.

Jesus states, "I am the 'true' vine, and my Father is the gardener."

We are to bear fruit for the glory of God, we cannot live a spirit filled life without God in it. No one can bear the fruit alone. We are all a part of the same family. Families must work together to remain whole; just as Christ works in us, through us and with us, to remain whole in Him.

1 John 2:28 (ESV) Children of God- ²⁸ *And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.*

Here in 1 John 2, in regards to Jesus return we are to do two things. Remain in Him with confidence in our faith and trust, and secondly to live our lives according to God's purpose in our lives and living a life that we will not be ashamed of if Christ returned tomorrow.

As we look around at all the things going on in the world today, in America today and we look at what the Bible says about the end times, you can't help but think surely we must be close to Christ's return.

We are not there yet; however, the prophecies in the Bible do seem to holding true and coming true before our very eyes. I believe God is moving in a very massive and momentous way right now to bring His children back home, to rescue us from ourselves and the situation we find ourselves in at this moment.

Right now all across the world and especially in about 60 countries on a daily basis, there are Christians being arrested, disappearing, or murdered in the streets simply for believing in Jesus Christ. Here in America, it is so distant from us that we just seem to continue on our merry way just as if nothing is happening. I am curious as to what God is saying to you during these times.

Jude 17-23 (ESV) A Call to Persevere -

¹⁷ But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." ¹⁹ It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

1. How do I remain in Jesus Christ in my daily life?

2. What can I do to live with God in confidence each day?

1 John 2:28 (ESV) Children of God- *²⁸ And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming*

Living 'With' God

DAY FOUR - OUR PERCEPTION OF LIVING WITH GOD

Perception is our truth, the way we see or believe or understand things 'is' OUR truth! How does that differ from what is true, and what is misperception on our part?

I know from experience in criminal cases where you have multiple witnesses to a crime, you may end up with not one, or two or three, but also multiple eye witness accounts with differences in height, size, hair color, race, clothes, weapon or no weapon, and the events in different order. That is also why, even in church on Sunday morning when you get that feeling the preacher is talking directly to you and God is trying to tell you something, it can be and many times is very different than the person sitting directly behind you. We all see and notice different things, see and hear different parts of the same sermon, but only pick up on what sticks out pertaining to us.

This can make for some interesting conversations sometimes when we don't recall the preacher saying that during the service, but someone else swears up and down that is what he or she heard. The same with witnesses, if you gave all of them a lie detector test, they would all pass because they truly believe what 'they' saw to be truth.

The Word of God given to us is the best place to find the truth. Scripture spells out God's truth pretty simply so everyone can understand what He is trying to tell us. God is truth, and love and mercy and grace. God is All, in All, and over All. Come to God as scripture tells us to, coming to Him should be easy, yet we make it extremely difficult for us and for Him because of this world's ideas and culture and so many myths and pre-conceived notions and misperceptions about who God is. God is NOT of this world, God CREATED this world. God's ways are not our ways. We try to wrap our heads around so many things about what God is and who He is, and what His purpose for us is. Spending time wondering and searching for things we may never understand will lead to confusion; in our lives, in our faith and also in our homes, marriages and of course our churches. Where there is confusion, there is a foothold for the evil one to infiltrate every aspect of our lives mentioned above and more.

Romans 12:1-3 (NIV) *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

³ *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.*

If we are unable to bring into unison, the Spirit with the heart and carnal mind, our journey is going to be very difficult and frustrating. We as Christians must surrender our lives to God, asking for forgiveness

from ALL our sins. We must renew our minds just as we who were baptized in the Spirit were born anew. Romans 12.

God knows us, He knows our hearts and minds, He has not only forgiven us for our sins we have confessed, but He has forgotten them. They are no more. Christ has already paid the debt with His blood for our sin.

Acts 15:7-9 (ESV)

⁷ And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, ⁹ and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

1. What are some of the things I need to 'renew' my mind about in my life?

2. What things in my perception of God do I need to evaluate in my life?

3. What questions do I have about my relationship with God?

Romans 14:17-18 (ESV)

¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

Living 'With' God

DAY FIVE - OVERCOMING TRIALS AND TEMPTATION

How are 'you' most tempted on a daily basis? Is it while driving to work? Does that person that cuts you off or is driving like a foolish person make you angry? Is it your children, who are pushing every button they can find in the mornings because they don't want to go to school? Is it the anxiety you feel when it comes time to pay a bill? Is it someone at work, the way they look or carry themselves, or how they talk, or simply how they work?

If we do not receive Joy from the things in our lives, if we cannot see past the present and see the big picture, it leaves us vulnerable to temptation. **Joy is, knowing Jesus Christ Stands with us in all things. Joy Remains in Us.**

Be Confident in the Joy of Jesus Christ. The joy God desires us to have in our hearts is deeper than mere happiness; it is rooted in God and comes from Him. Since it comes from God, it is more serene and stable than worldly happiness, which is merely emotional and lasts only for a time

1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV) No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Can we fail in temptation and still be a child of God? Can we be tempted and lose that battle and learn from it, or like so many dwell there, in the misery and pain, the shame we feel because we let something get in between our faith and trust in God?

John 16:33 (ESV)

³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

There is no situation, no trial, no temptation that God has not foreseen and has not planned for in your life. No matter what it is, there is a place in God's word that can give you the peace and joy to withstand whatever it is.

Once you accept it for what it is, overcome it and move on. Too often we overcome it, but we stay right where we are, not moving forward, but stagnation sets in and we are tempted again and again. Move on, do your best, then move on to your next best. Glory to Glory, move on. Open the next door that God has placed before you. If you open the wrong door, you will know it is wrong, because there will be no joy inside of it. That doesn't mean that the door you open doesn't come with some measure of discomfort, or uneasiness for you. Many times the doors we open are to move us forward and prepare

us for our next Glory in Christ Jesus. Do not spend too much time questioning yourself, but trust instead in God moving you towards your purpose.

Romans 7:15-17 (NIV) ¹⁵ *I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.* ¹⁶ *And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.* ¹⁷ *As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.*

The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 7:15-17 about not doing what he wants, but doing the things he does 'not' want to do. But, there is a bit of a missed message in verse 17, "it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me."

First, Paul is letting the church know, that even an apostle of Jesus Christ struggles with doing what is righteous (right), and let's all of us know that we are not alone in this struggle. Secondly, by realizing, that even though Christ is in us, and saved us from the punishment of our sins through salvation, we were all born into sin, which was also an inheritance we received from the 'world' and from Adam and Eve.

Look at who was tempted but God still chose to use them even when they failed.

2 Samuel 11:2-3 (NIV)

² *One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful,* ³ *and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite."*

Genesis 3:6 (NIV)

⁶ *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

Luke 22:56-59 (NIV) Peter denies Jesus

⁵⁶ *A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him."* ⁵⁷ *But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said.* ⁵⁸ *A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them."* *"Man, I am not!" Peter replied.* ⁵⁹ *About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean."*

1. How have you failed, but God brought you through?

2. Have I moved on to my next best, my next glory?

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DAY SIX -Final Thoughts and Prayers

God designed us, He created us, He gave us the breath of life, not to serve Him as a slave or as an obligated servant, but as His son or daughter, as His creation that He loves and gains much joy in watching grow and mature.

1 John 3:1-2 (ESV)

3 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

Prayer:

Father God, I want to be your child. I want to feel your love in my life and let you be my father in heaven the way you desire to be in my life. I didn't realize you were walking beside me all the time, and I want to spend more time walking and talking with you. I want to share my life with you on a close personal level like never before. Father, I know you are there, I know you love me, I know you have not only saved me, but redeemed me by your grace. Father thank you for sending your Son so that I may live and enjoy a life filled with your presence in my life and those around me. Father God, I know now that I can talk to you and you will hear me, that you will love me no matter what. I long for our time together God, I want that feeling of fullness as you walk beside me and walk me through the darkest of times. I ask all of this in the name of Christ Jesus. Amen

1 John 5:3-5 (ESV)

³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Jeremiah 20:11-13 (ESV)

¹¹ But the Lord is with me as a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble; they will not overcome me. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹² O Lord of hosts, who tests the righteous, who sees the heart and the mind, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you have I committed my cause. ¹³ Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hand of evildoers.

The Lonely Road

**The Lonely Road,
From pavement to gravel.
Opposed to that narrow road,
So few will attempt to travel.
When out of the night,
A brilliant light will come.
Glory to many,
Fear and hatred for some.
Man awakened,
From their slumberous sleep.
Heart strings pulled,
Many will weep.
Burned to the ground,
Nothing but ashes all around.
Raised from that fire,
Their spirits are higher.
Fed from the spring,
Of the Living water, they swallow.
No more fear,
No longer hollow.
Renewed by the Spirit,
Shined on by the Son.
Out of the ashes,
New men run.**

-Scott Elston - August 30, 2019