

How do we live in intimacy with God?

Having intimacy with God is different than simply reading and studying the Bible every day, or even becoming an expert in what Scripture says—that’s only factual knowledge. As important as that is, it’s not the same as intimacy with God.

The close, personal relationship with God that the Apostle John describes as *koinonia* (1 John 1:3) is more than reading the Word and praying, especially if prayer means we’re doing all the talking. We can talk *at* God all day, praying without ceasing, without knowing or experiencing Him personally, which is what the word *koinonia* means. When we live in spiritual intimacy with Him, we not only talk to Him, but we listen to Him. We learn to hear His still, small voice that makes an impression deep within our hearts.

Jesus said eternal life is knowing God (John 17:3). The word He used means “knowing through personal experience” with the sense of progressively growing more deeply intimate with someone. It’s the same word He used when He said He is the good shepherd who knows His sheep, and His sheep know Him (John 10:14). It’s the way David knew Him in the Psalms (Psalm 23; 27:4; 63:1).

If that isn’t our experience today, we are missing the very essence of our Christian walk. Everything else flows out of, and is strengthened by, our relationship of spiritual intimacy with God—our prayers for one another, our service, our goals and priorities of life.

So how do we cultivate such intimacy? We slow down in our time with God. We learn to listen and recognize His voice (John 10:2-5). We linger in His presence.