

An Open Letter to Those Who Want a Relationship With God

Dear Beloved,

I hope this letter finds you well, and with a curiosity about knowing God. I'm not talking about religion as a hypocritical afterthought (as we too often see it today), for that is not of God. I'm talking about having a relationship with God. If you're interested, please keep reading, and if you're not, then please accept my apology for any inconvenience this letter might have caused you.

As very brief testimony, I can tell you that in years past, I personally ruined my life in sin and lost almost every single thing of Real Value I ever had. I am very much a Prodigal son who suffered greatly from the prison of pride and pain I had put myself in. But the Lord pulled me through and helped put all the broken pieces back together, refining me by His Word, His Spirit, and fire, all out of Love for me (as He Loves you too !). It was as though the Lord found a weary, scarred, and hungry dog amidst His trash, and was kind enough to take him in and heal him. So at this point, I am happy to say I'm a very loyal pup at my Father's feet, and that's where I will stay. But I'm wagging my tail that you've come to visit. :)

For anyone who is truly sincere about knowing God in a wonderful relationship and Walking with Him always, it's really very simple. There are only two steps:

- (1) knowing what Jesus teaches
- (2) putting what Jesus teaches into practice.

And if you're just starting out, don't worry ! You know all those people who call themselves "Christian" and say "Lord, Lord", even for many years, but somehow don't seem very Christ-like to you as they continue to do the same things everyone else in the world does ? Let me tell you, they might know who God and Jesus are, and might even be able to recite some Scripture. But guess what ? The devil himself, Satan, knows who God and Jesus are, and how to recite Scripture better than anyone. And just like the vast majority of self-declared "Christians", Satan doesn't do what Jesus teaches either. This is why Jesus tells us clearly that no one like that will enter God's Kingdom. But again, don't worry, there are still a few True Christians left ! For you, just pray to God with a sincere heart and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you as you follow the two steps above.

And if you don't have a church yet, all the better. Just use God's Word, the Bible, for now, and you'll be fine. Frankly, a person should only go through the process of choosing a fellowship group after learning the Truth from Jesus. You see, many churches, as hard as it is to believe, don't actually teach what Jesus does. Sure, they'll pay lip service to Him, but in practice, their hearts are far from Him as they push their own denomination's agenda and adulterating doctrines, covering it all with a veneer of false love. They avoid the fact that True Love actually contains the Truth, and that means teaching in completeness all that Jesus does.

Truly, according to the Bible, if we follow Jesus there would be no Sunday worship or even denominations at all. Each of those was formed later by the earthly motives of men, not the Word of God. God's only Sabbath rest in the Bible - for ANY of us - is Friday evening through Saturday evening (just when we need rest !), and the only Christian church in His Word is the Original one formed by the Apostles and disciples after Christ's crucifixion and ascension to Heaven, having no denomination at all. It was simply just Christian, based on God's Word, and was modeled after Jesus' earthly Ministry, with His Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) to teach *all* He taught.

Again, don't worry about these things right now... with the help of the Holy Spirit's guidance as you learn from Jesus, you'll be able to discern the Truth from lies, and eventually find a fellowship group that suits you.

With that, here we go...

Step (1) - Knowing What Jesus Teaches:

There is no other way to know Jesus, and therefore His Father, God, except to read Jesus' teachings in the Four Gospels - the Books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Bible - a few chapters a week, each and every week. If we will not give God that much time, it shows our heart to Him, and what our priorities are. But if we do give God that time, which isn't much, then He will show His Heart to us !

So start in Matthew, a few chapters this week, a few the next, and so on. Then onto Mark. Then through Luke. Then through John. Then start over in Matthew. A few chapters a week on endless reel... for life. There is simply no better way to be continually well-fed by the Bread of Life. After all, if we make Jesus' teachings second nature to ourselves, it becomes very easy to know God. God certainly does not *prevent* us from knowing Him, does He ? Yet it is only those who truly *want* to know Him who will take the very simple steps to do so.

And while the Ten Commandments are contained in the Four Gospels, as Jesus teaches us to keep them *and* expands upon them for us *and* lives them out by example, I can tell you that it's helpful for someone new to God's Word to also have a copy of the Commandments in their "list" form, from Exodus 20 or Deuteronomy 5.

Regarding the Ten Commandments, Jesus teaches the importance of knowing both the *Letter* and the *Heart* of them, for the Heart expands the Letter to its full meaning, thereby revealing God's Standard of Righteousness. For example, do not murder (the Letter of the Sixth Commandment) also means do not keep anger or ill will toward anyone (the Heart of the Sixth Commandment). In the same way, no adultery also means no lust or divorce. Not using the Lord's name in vain also means not speaking His name lightly or frivolously. Not stealing also means not robbing God (we shall be freely generous with the resources God freely gives us, by tithes and offerings to share God's Word and help others in need). Not coveting also means not participating in the *many* inwardly and outwardly destructive behaviors that stem from using this world's superficial and wrongful measures to define ourselves (instead of pride, selfishness, vanity, and comparison driving a desire for approval, riches, status, power, or other exaltation, we shall be content with God's providence and His measure of us only). And so on. (I won't give them all away here; it's up to you with the Holy Spirit, as you go through Jesus' teachings, to learn the Letter and Heart of all the Ten Commandments, to see how they include every aspect of human behavior.)

Now, as we read the Gospels, we might first notice how Jesus heals many people. Then, we might take in His message of Faith, repentance, forgiveness of others, and bearing good fruit - all critical to our Salvation. And over time, as our eyes adjust to see even more, it comes into focus that Jesus' teachings also directly relate to and expound on the Commandments... the very things about which Faith, repentance, forgiveness of others, and bearing good fruit revolve ! This is because God and Jesus want us to be healed as well.

Jesus not only teaches us to keep the Commandments ("Good teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"), He also ties the keeping of the Two Most Important Commandments (Love for God and others) to the keeping of the Ten Commandments (Truth). (See Matthew 19:16-19, 22:34-40; Mark 10:17-19, 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-28, 18:18-20.)

In fact, this is God's Law - the Two Most Important Commandments and the Ten Commandments working together - just as Jesus came to teach, and just as He came to fulfill as our example to do the same. (Yes, Jesus wanted the Jews of His day to also keep their Law of Moses regarding priests, feasts, rituals, and ordinances, because He knew it was in their minds and on their hearts as part of their Righteous devotion to God. And so it was good, IF they were also keeping God's Law. Christians today might also have various devotional activities to God, and as long as they help keep a person's heart right with Him, and don't incorporate sin, it's okay.)

With this, we should know that keeping God's Law written in our heart and mind, and manifesting its Truth in our behavior because of Love for God and others, is *the very definition* of being a New Covenant Christian, just as God tells us in Jeremiah 31:31-34. There is also a New Testament reminder of this in Hebrews 8:8-12, and both succinctly state what Jesus makes clear to us.

I'll tell you what... the next time you see a self-declared Christian, ask them out of interest if they are a *New Covenant* Christian. If they seem puzzled, ask them if they have God's Law written on their heart and mind. If they say yes, then kindly ask them what the Two Most Important Commandments are. Most will be happy to tell you. Then ask them if they can list the Ten Commandments. If the blood drains from their face as they attempt to stammer through a few of them, know that this is a serious matter - nothing to judge, but an opportunity to serve, by discussing what was missed. And of course, to not be a hypocrite, you'll need to know them yourself by having them in your own heart and mind, and you'll also need to be keeping them. After all, none of us are to continue in willful sin once we know better. Remaining *sanctified* - that is, remaining in Christ, on the Path and moving Forward - means keeping all the revealed Truth we currently have to the best of our abilities.

We're either keeping the New Covenant with God, sealed by His Son's blood, or we're not. It's not meant to harm us, for God only wants to prosper us - His Way. The Father Loves the children, but He doesn't want them *only* Born Again, He also wants them to Grow - in Him - in knowledge, character, and responsibility. He's looking for Real and True Christians who mature according to the capabilities He knows they have and in the circumstances in which they live. It's only those on the Path and moving Forward who will Walk into the Kingdom. Not all will be at the same place on the Path, but assuredly those going into the Kingdom will all be Walking Forward. The lazy, the insincere, the procrastinators, the stagnant, the backsliders, the exit-takers... Jesus warns over and over that dead wood and immature plants that don't grow and bear fruit are good for nothing other than to be thrown on the fire and burned.

Let's not forget, God and Jesus are Love AND Truth in perfect equal measure. Love and Truth are like Grace and God's Law - they are meant to be married, working together as one. Many self-declared Christians just want the Love while attempting to throw out the Truth, wishing and hoping that Jesus' death on the Cross will somehow allow them to continue in willful sin. But that's not what Jesus teaches, so we'll listen to Him instead. In fact, the True Love of the Father is not the approval of sin, but the opposite. As Jesus tells us clearly and repeatedly in John 14, if we Love Him, we'll keep His Commandments; that is how He will know our Love for Him - by our keeping the Truth. God Loved us first; so much so that He sent His only Son Jesus here to enable us in Victory over sin AND death. But if we refuse to bother with the first one, we cut ourself off from the second.

Therefore, for our part, by a heart of Love, we must purposely seek to know our sin so we can willfully change away from it. Sin is a *life-destroyer*, so by His parental Love, God wants it out of our lives - by repentance, forgiveness of others, and obedience to His Commandments. Willfully ignoring this Truth God is trying to give us through Jesus is the same as willful sin itself, and is in fact the very basis of the Unpardonable Sin.

Again, Jesus tells us exactly what will happen to those folks who despise the Truth, pretending to be all about Him on the outside at various times while they're really all about themselves and the world on the inside. We surely don't want their final ending. It's only a Love of the Truth that brings us Blessing now and Eternally.

With that reminder, be assured that you can stick with the Four Gospels to find your Salvation in completeness. I know many Christians who are proud to believe they know "it all" will tell you otherwise, that you must know the Bible backwards and forwards to not be lost. But I stake my own life in front of you that God Himself knows what I am telling you is exactly how He pulled me out of the pit of sin that was my former life. Yes, along with that, His Holy Spirit often placed a helpful sermon or a given life situation in front of me at just the right time to reinforce what I was learning, even as He still does. And yes, surely, as one chooses, they will find the time to read all of God's Word as they Grow with Him (Jesus even points us to Old Testament Scripture that pertains to His message !). But always know that Jesus did not leave us incomplete in His earthly Ministry which is recorded in the Gospels. There is need-to-know and want-to-know, and it is most important to make sure we have the need-to-know working properly within us first. Then the rest is wonderful to consume, satisfying our hunger for more as we Walk steadily Forward in our Salvation.

A final point here regarding the rest of the Bible... if anyone you know attempts to read any part of the Bible in a way that refutes something Jesus teaches, they are on dangerous ground, rejecting Jesus Himself. But they too are wanted in the Kingdom, so by Love for God and them, and because you read and know what Jesus teaches, you may be able to gently help them re-make their discernment using the Light of the Gospels.

So, Step (1) again... read Matthew, Mark, Luke and John on endless reel, a few chapters a week with a True heart to know the Father, keeping refreshed in your heart and mind the Two Most Important Commandments and the Ten Commandments. Easy !

Step (2) - Putting What Jesus Teaches into Practice:

There is no better way to put Jesus' teachings into practice other than to purposely think about what you read in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It's really quite simple. Each day, pray good morning to God when you wake up. Then, as you go about your day, keep your consciousness with Him, discussing and contemplating what you are reading, and how to apply it to your every thought, word, and behavior, leaving nothing out. Then at bedtime, pray goodnight to Him as you go to sleep.

A beautiful change begins to take place within us as we do this. As we get used to our new habit of thinking about God's Word, and praying and conversing with Him during our daily routine, we begin to find God extremely comforting in all situations. If our heart is True, it isn't too long before we crave to keep ourselves with Him continually, and in that way, we find our thoughts, words, and behavior increasingly conforming to His Will.

And since we can't walk with Jesus in person at this time, we're even given the Holy Spirit just for the asking, to be our daily interactive Friend and Counselor. We're never alone ! As your Faith increases, you will be amazed at how the Holy Spirit interacts directly with you, especially as you get used to knowing it's Him !

In your growing relationship with God, you will see how His Son, His Holy Spirit, and His Word all work together for the good within you. They will guide you and prompt you. They will uplift you with Love and convict you in the Truth, thereby filling in the valleys of life and lowering the mountaintops of pride, all to make your Path smooth and straight. They will help you apply God's Word to your life, one realm at a time. They will use your current knowledge of Jesus' teachings to reveal even more. They will help you Spiritually understand the world around you, the very field where you are to Grow. And They will challenge you, to direct and stretch your Faith even further. As the Love pulls and the Truth pushes, the tears will roll, my friend, and it will be amazing !

Is it easy ? Nothing truly Valuable is easy, but in a daily Walk with God, it's more *surrender* than effort. The main challenge comes at the beginning, from a person's human side. A person just starting out might still be toxic with the inner or outer habits of pride, sin, self-righteousness, hypocrisy, hatred, and a lack of forgiveness of others. But God takes us where we are so we can clean up *with* Him. If we persist with a True heart, we Grow, and through Jesus, our hardness dissipates. It's like soft water flowing over hard rock in a stream... the rock is eventually worn away. Frankly, it would be much more difficult to continue a life in sin than to be persistent in changing some bad habits in order to come to know Peace in a Reclaimed Life in Jesus.

It's a matter of understanding who we are. As Jesus tells us, we are to Love God with all our heart, Soul, mind, and strength. Different than the Holy Spirit, our Soul is the Spirit God put in each one of us at birth. But it essentially remains a lifeless, ungerminated seed until we feed it God's Word. The rest - our heart, mind, and strength - is our "flesh", also known as our mental, emotional, and physical states (or "human side").

I tell you there is no better feeling in the world than to watch as our Spirit grows to become the Parent within us over our human side, all from the nourishment of God's Word and our willingness to surrender in Faith to what Jesus teaches. As we persevere with Love and a True Heart, we see our "self" diminish as our Spirit increases, and Proper Order is established within us, solidifying over time. With Proper Order, our "flesh" (our mental, emotional, and physical states) no longer rules us, but is subject to our Spirit which is subject to God.

To see such Real Results spring forth, knowing how it pleases our Father and His Son and all the Angels in Heaven who rejoice for us... and all in the Light of Jesus' Sacrifice, even as undeserving as we are... it breaks a person in a wonderful way, bursting their heart with humility and Joy as they learn to Walk in the Spirit with their Creator. It is indeed the Greatest Blessing of all.

So, to reiterate Step (2)... we must put Jesus' teachings into practice, just as He tells us in Matthew 7:21-27. And the only way to do that is to focus on the Father and His Word in our daily living, just as Jesus shows us.

As an example of how other Scripture supports the Gospels, the way to put Jesus' teachings into practice is also beautifully stated in The Message version of the Bible in Romans 12:1-2, shown here:

"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

Well there we have it... Two Simple Steps to a great relationship with God, available to anyone !

Therefore, to start, don't let any person or denomination block the door for you. Simply go straight to the source, Jesus, because His teaching is Pure and complete. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and a bit of surrender in Faith on your part, a fantastic, life-changing relationship with God will come to Life within you, all with the solid Foundation of His Word.

It's time... the Father wants you with Him, and frankly, so do I. It will be good to see you in His Kingdom !

With Love and Truth,
A Witness

P.S. If this letter encourages you, please consider passing it along to others as well. Thank you for reading this far, and may God Bless you as you look to Him ! For more, click on all the top tabs at www.unhyp.com.