

07) How to Find a Personal Relationship with God

Ancient Israel fell into the trap of thinking their salvation was tied to their birthright. After all they were descendants of Abraham, they reasoned. Sadly, they forgot that salvation is the result of a personal relationship with God, not heritage. A person who attended some Bible Prophecy meetings I assisted with told me that he believed every Bible truth he had learned from us. He felt the lessons of truth we taught, some new to him, were straight from the Bible. But he also felt that if his “old truth and church” was good enough for his dad, and granddad, and great granddad, etc, then it should be good enough for him. Even today, some Christians seem to think that their membership in or association with a particular denomination is their key to salvation, and thus, tragically, many never take the time to study the Bible and find a personal and saving relationship with Jesus Christ. They continue in the “church of their ancestors”.

Let's discover what the Bible teaches us about how to find and develop a personal relationship with God and make God “my God”

Proverbs 23:26. It starts by hearing, and heeding, God’s invitation to give Him our heart.

Jeremiah 29:11-13. God promises you that He has an abundant, hope & peace filled plan for you, IF you’re willing to search for Him with your full heart, no holding back, no reservations.

Hebrews 10:22-24. God invites you to draw close to Him. Set aside the distractions that prevent it. Choose to put your trust in Him so you He can show you why you should. Along with a new mind and heart, faith is a gift He gives, and then the believer will continue to develop their faith. Also, perhaps you have heard that old saying: “birds of a feather flock together”. Who are you “flocking with”? Pray and ask God to guide you to His people who already have a strong saving walk with Him. Ask to hear their “testimony” – their story of how they found God and learned to trust and follow Him. Their stories can be a good way to begin, but keep in mind these are their testimonies, and their relationship with God; God will help you find and develop yours!

John 8:32. As you search for God, He will reveal Himself. He does that primarily through the Bible. If you don’t have one, get a good Bible. Start with a good translation, not a paraphrase. I like, and recommend, the New King James version as it uses more updated English words but is still a pretty good translation. When you read it, look for Jesus Christ on every page, in each story. The Old Testament pointed forward to Him and His ministry, the New Testament revealed Him and His ministry, they both teach of and contain Him and His truth. As you discover Him and His truth, you will find freedom from sin, guilt, bad habits, and from the penalty of death as a result of sin.

James 1:5. Its ok if it doesn't all make sense right away, keep reading, searching, studying; it's a process that takes time. But God will lead you and provide the wisdom you need to find Him.

Jeremiah 32:39-41. As you are searching for God, He will be doing His work in you. He will be drawing you to Him. He will be transforming your heart and life; He does not remove every trial or temptation (they help us grow in faith and character), but He will give you grace and strength and peace in spite of them. And He wants to make a covenant, an agreement, a promise with you - to do you good for as long as you stay in this relationship with Him.

Ezekiel 36:25-27. The new covenant is first promised and offered in the Old Testament, sadly Israel rejected it and countered with their own covenant – what came to be known as or called the old covenant. The old covenant is a belief system that a person can keep God's will and law, in their own strength, ability, and righteousness, and thus earn salvation. Of course the Bible teaches that is an impossibility. Which is why salvation can only be obtained as a gift from God. The New Covenant is a belief system that God will transform the willing person through His grace, He transforms their heart (attitudes/emotions) and mind (thoughts), and writes His law on their heart (He enables us to understand it in its true spirit and meaning). Then He empowers us to actually keep it, not in our strength, but in His. That is grace! The new covenant never did away with God's ten commandments, rather it enables the person to cherish and obey them.

Philippians 1:6. Rest assured, that when you allow God to begin this good work, this saving personal relationship with and in you, He also takes responsibility for its ultimate success... as long as you choose to let Him, as long as you choose to stay connected to Him in this new friendship!

John 5:39. As you seek Him, as you continue to develop your personal relationship with Him, keep searching the Bible. It tells His story (his-tory, history), the story of salvation and this great controversy between good and evil, between God (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and Satan. Don't ever stop searching for Him, and learning of His love for you and all mankind, and growing in your love for Him and in His salvation.

Psalms 34:8. Many years ago, as a young adult, I was going through some pretty intense life trials. While I was not a converted Christian, I had some understanding of Christianity. So in desperation, I prayed. I told God that I had tried what the world offered and found it lacking, unsatisfying. I told Him that I would put Him to the test. I would, for a period of time, sincerely search for Him with all my heart to see if He was real and if He cared about me as Christianity taught. Friend, that was the best decision I ever made! My life miraculously changed as God showed Himself and His love for me, to me, in ways I could not deny. I simply wanted more of Him, and wanted to respond to His love by loving and following Him. I learned that He was someone, the only One, that I could trust, follow, and serve (out of love) because He loved me!

May I ask you dear friend, what do you have to lose? Give God an opportunity to show you His greatness, His love, His care for you! "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good"