

The Simple Key to Spiritual Intimacy With Your Spouse

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

This Scripture goes on further, describing the oneness of the Word and God and how they were one with each other from the beginning. I think this is the most romantic spiritual picture of intimacy. Oneness and togetherness are so much a part of God’s will for us in our abundant Christian marriages.

I love reading the Bible and feeling the very keen sense that the Author, the Holy Spirit, from beginning to end, has intimacy as a personal objective for His readers. In the beginning, God made man and woman in the garden, not only for fellowship with each other, but for fellowship with Him together.

In the beginning, it is believed God daily walked with Adam and Eve until sin separated them. Could you imagine, as a couple, having God the Father teaching you how to love, commit to each other and feel equally loved and understood? But the Holy Spirit does not leave us with only the picture of how God intended it to be in the garden—being intimate with God and each other. He also pens a great word picture of Christ and the church.

The picture is of the hero, the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, loving and dying for His bride so she could live and be with Him forever. This word picture closes with Jesus coming back for His bride and having a great big banquet to celebrate an eternity of intimacy with her.

God is a romantic, and He definitely is interested in the issue of intimacy. This is why it is so important that we reflect on the Scripture: “In the beginning was the Word, and

the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Intimacy without God is short-lived and incomplete. Intimacy with God has three levels of depth: spirit, soul and body. Even if a man and a woman could achieve two levels of intimacy, emotional and sexual, they would feel incomplete without a relationship with the all-loving God in both of their lives.

My personal spiritual journey started with the love of God being poured into me through the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Without His consistent love and gentleness, I would know of nothing to write on intimacy. He is my greatest teacher on giving and receiving love and intimacy.

The Scripture that resonates this message loud and clear to me is Psalm 127:1a: “Except the Lord build the house, those who build labor in vain.” This can be no truer than for the couple who desires intimacy within their marriage without God actively involved in the process. As this Scripture clearly reads, this would definitely be laboring without benefit.

For those of you reading this who are in the family of faith, spiritual intimacy is not an automatic attribute freely given to those who believe. I have spent countless sessions with believers who don’t understand even the basics of spiritual intimacy. They have painstakingly struggled through the concept of intimacy with the Father individually as well as spiritual intimacy as a couple.

Honesty is so intricate to spiritual intimacy that we must address it. There is no possible way to improve intimacy when dishonestly and deception is rampant. Many Christians have what I call an image relationship with themselves. They work and craft their image to such an extent that they swallow it themselves, hook, line and sinker.

Self-honesty is important. As a fellow human being, I don’t know of one person who is perfect or even close to perfect. If you take anyone out of the normal comforts of everyday life

and put them in a stressful situation such as an all-day layover in an airport or stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic, less than wonderful things often come out of their hearts.

It's wonderful to be human; our very design doesn't allow perfection. If it did, we wouldn't need a Savior, would we?

Going beyond the false religious image and seeking out who you really are is just the beginning of spiritual intimacy. If you're thinking this doesn't apply to you, think of three of your biggest flaws. Now take a minute and come up with seven more. I find in doing this, many of us can come up with one or two, but 10? Who can even image they could have 10 faults? Take a moment at this point and write down 10 faults about yourself and see how long this takes.

The longer it takes to come up with 10 faults, the more important self-honesty is going to be on your journey toward spiritual intimacy with your spouse. By the way, when you're writing these faults down, don't cheat and ask your spouse to help.

Honesty about how you feel, honesty about your perceptions and honesty with who you are is integral to spiritual intimacy.

Recently I was at a lunch meeting, and a woman asked me how a man could be taught to see the real beauty of a woman when he first looks at her. My reply to her was that this was not possible. How can you appreciate the caverns of a woman's soul at a single moment? It takes a journey of decades for a man to behold the beauty of a woman. The fragrance of a woman's many passions for life, love and relationships; her waves of emotions; her valleys of woundedness and fears could not be taken in all at a superficial glance.

Intimacy is a journey with a destination. It's the adventure of discovery that makes spiritual intimacy so much fun for you and your spouse. Honesty is one component on the way to spiritual intimacy. This honesty must be within yourself, with

God and with your spouse. {eoa}

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