

Joyce Meyer: The Shocking Power of Intimacy With God

Years ago, when I was just learning how to develop a personal relationship with God, I had a lot of problems. I was a mess because of the abuse I had experienced growing up. As a result, I was insecure, unstable, unhappy most of the time and I got angry whenever things didn't go my way. It was a miserable way to live.

I eventually reached a point where I was willing to do whatever I had to do to have peace and to really enjoy my life. So I got serious about my relationship with God and started studying His Word and spending time with Him in prayer.

As I did this, I discovered that God wanted me to have abundant life and to live with His righteousness, peace and joy. But getting there was a battle!

John 10:10 (AMP) says Jesus "came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows]." And Romans 14:17 says, "The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking [what one likes], but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

We can experience abundant life and have peace and joy in the Holy Spirit when we develop an intimate, personal relationship with God. And two main keys to having intimacy with God are truth and time.

You've probably heard the saying, "The truth will set you free!" This is not just a wise proverb someone came up with; it's actually taken from Scripture. Jesus says in John 8:31-32 that "if you abide in My word [continually obeying My teachings and living in accordance with them, then] you are truly My disciples. And you will know the truth [regarding

salvation], and the truth will set you free [from the penalty of sin].”

If we’re going to be set free from sin—wrong mindsets, attitudes and behavior that are not like Christ—then we must face the truth about ourselves and choose to believe what God says in His Word more than what we think or feel or what others say. We need to be completely truthful with God and let Him into every part of our lives.

This means that when we have thoughts like, “I’m no good. I never do anything right. I’ll never amount to anything. Nothing ever works out right for me!” we talk back to ourselves and say what God’s Word says. For example:

- God is love, He loves me, and nothing can separate me from His love (1 John 4:16; John 3:16; Rom.8:38-39).
- I am a new creation in Christ, and I am made right with God because of what Jesus has done for me (2 Cor. 5:17, 21).
- I can do whatever I need to do through Christ who gives me strength (Phil. 4:13).
- I trust God and put my faith in Him to cause everything in my life to work together for my good as I walk out His plans for my life (Rom. 8:28).

These declarations are based on a few verses you can use to come against old mindsets that don’t line up with the truth of God’s Word. Look up the Scriptures referenced above in your Bible and study them so you can get them rooted in your heart. It may help if you write them on notecards or in a journal and read them frequently.

As you meditate on God’s Word, you’ll renew your mind with the truth, because there is power in the truth to set you free from anything that’s holding you back in your walk with Him.

The second thing we must do to cultivate intimacy with God is spend regular, quality time with Him each day. Christianity

isn't about a weekly trip to church or fulfilling a checklist of religious rituals that you feel obligated to do to stay on God's good side.

Jesus died for us so we can have a personal relationship with Him, not a religion. You don't just need to know *about* God ... it's more important for you to know Him.

If God doesn't have first place in your life, you will never be fulfilled ... you'll never have real, lasting peace and joy in anything you do or any circumstance you experience. But if you will abide in Christ, continually obeying His teachings and living by them, then you will be empowered to live with victory over sin. You'll have true intimacy with God!

If you've been struggling to grow in your relationship with God or you're discouraged because of battles you can't seem to get through, I want to encourage you to make a determined decision to spend regular, quality time alone with God each day. Even if you can only spend a few minutes with Him in the morning or during your lunch break at work, make this your No. 1 priority.

God loves you so much! He wants you to succeed in being everything He created you to be and having the life Jesus came to give you. Make your relationship with Him the foundation of everything in your life and you will win the battles you face, because He will fight for you!