

# BENEFITS OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP (WITH ALMIGHTY GOD)

#S277R

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Spiritual growth and development in the true Christian life of faith, and our being prepared by the Holy Spirit to meet Christ on His return, requires a right start and learning how to believe for the Holy Spirit to take possession of us. All of this depends on our personal relationship with God because it revolves around an unconditional surrender of our lives to Him, and our believing that we are forgiven and cleansed (through the Atonement work of Christ on the Cross).

It means believing we have been accepted and taken possession of by God, and that we have become "dead indeed unto sin, but, living for God through our union with Jesus Christ". (Rom. 6:11). We have to take that attitude (or belief) in our heart, and we must maintain it by the help of the Holy Spirit, who will help us reject the devil's attempts to tell us otherwise. It would not be possible for anyone to make any progress in the Christian life without the Holy Spirit (or indwelling Christ which is the same Spirit). That is a position of belief that we can never afford to get away from. If we fall away from that position, we are to get back to it right away, by repenting and surrendering our life afresh, to be led and guided by the Holy Spirit.

That is something that can be done at any time, and Jesus Christ (our Savior who already ascended and has gone before us to Heaven), is at the right hand of God pleading for us to come back to that position of belief and re-surrender of our life to Him. He does not want any soul to perish because of unbelief, which (the Apostle Paul explained) is idolatry, because if our belief (or trust) is not on Christ, then it is centered on something else aside from Him. [As a recent lesson brought out, our faith will automatically be on what we believe in our mind to be true). It is most important that we are believing what God's Word tells us, instead of what the devil is trying to convince us to believe (through sight, feeling, and suggestions to our mind).]

Since we can choose to repent, re-surrender our life, and get back to God at any time, that means it is our human responsibility and must be our decision to do that. We are to take our stand of faith on where the Bible says we are and believe that we are as the Atonement Blood of Christ has made us. That is God's divine Truth in reality and is the foundation of our personal relationship with God, which is what spiritual growth and development in a Christian life really depends on.

Personal dealing with God is just the opposite to our natural self-life. The natural instinct of the self-life (because it is controlled by the devil), is to do things by our own mind and intellect, and to get as far away from personal dealing with God as possible (in fact to ignore him completely if we can). That is the

worst factor about the sin of Adam, in that it brought about a complete separation from God, which resulted in an ignorance of Him,... (and many times a hostility toward His way and plan for meeting circumstances in this life).

Anything worthwhile that we ever expect to have in this life and for eternity, will come from God (through a personal relationship with Him). For a person to be separate from God (through having no dealings with Him), is the worst place that one can be,... because it robs us of the benefits of God's presence in our life. In reality, it shuts out everything that Jesus died on the Cross to provide for us in this life and robs us (sooner or later) of our life here and of Eternal life. Living a life separate from a personal trust in God, will land a person in the Lake of Fire, (if it is not repented of).

We must repent of that unbelief and get back to believing that the Atonement Blood of Christ has pardoned, cleansed, and paid the price for our forgiveness. If we truly believe those facts in our heart (and choose not to accept the devil's lies and suggestions), then our faith will follow suit and we will be recipients of God's mercy. Those who believe lying vanities (which means the devil's thoughts and suggestions), "forsake their own mercy." Prophet Jonah was inspired to say, (Jonah 2:8-9), "Those who regard worthless idols, Forsake their own Mercy. But I will sacrifice to You. With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation [is] of the Lord."

God had to deal harshly with Jonah, but He must have seen a remote possibility of him being brought to repentance. God gave Jonah an opportunity to confess his mistake (of listening to the devil's lie that he would only be mocked if he were to warn the people of Nineveh of God's wrath.) God will give us the same opportunity to repent (or we may choose not to repent of following the devil's lies. Fortunately for Jonah, he did truly repent and poured out his heart to God in personal prayer of repentance (or we would not have heard about Jonah).

That is what we need to do, relate personally with God, open our mind, and truly pour out our heart to Him (in a personal relationship with Him). Our victory (our answer to prayer) lies between us and God, and we don't need anyone else in between. That is what spiritual growth and development in the Christian life really depends on. God knows what He needs to do, for Him to teach us to know His will and to believe on His promises, because He is the perfect Teacher.

God can very easily reveal to our mind, where changes are needed in our life. However, when we are stubborn and not willing to repent, He sometimes has to deal more harshly with us. Sometimes it takes a harder knock to wake us up (as one might say). Nevertheless, we must be thankful that God finds us worthy to be dealt with (as He gave Jonah opportunity to confess his mistake of listening to the devil's lies).

Through a personal relationship with God, He will enable us to reject the devil's lies and suggestions. We will come to believe on God's promises, as He will enable us to realize that every promise that He has given us, is supported by the power of the Atonement Blood

of His Son, Jesus Christ. We will believe that His promises are true and realize that we do not have to believe lying vanities, and forsake the mercy that God extended through the sacrifice of His Son.]

(2 Cor.7:1 admonishes) "Since we have these promises dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God." That is the place that God wants to bring us to, (if we are willing to let Him teach us to trust on His Word).

In reality, what the Bible teaches is, that we are to go to God about everything in our life. We are to open our minds and hearts to God, explaining to Him in private prayer, exactly what we need to know about some thing or situation, or what we desire to have that would be within His will for us to have in this life. God hears and answers a prayer of faith, so we should get results when we pray (which also glorifies God).

We should get answers (along with knowledge and understanding that we need), on how to be victorious in our spiritual life; in the healing of our body; victory in our home; and how to enjoy His protection in all things. All of these blessings are part of God's plan for the believer who will deal personally with God, and not rely on any alternative plan.

The Gospel of Christ is one harmonious plan for the true believer, and we can't separate it into parts. We can't reject God's plan for healing (through faith), nor can we reject His plan for our protection or finances (all to be received through faith), and we certainly cannot reject His plan for victory in the home.

The Gospel of Christ stands and falls as one. If we reject any part of God's plan (or just leave out part of His plan for the true believer), very soon the rest of God's plan will be put aside. We will be given the opportunity to repent (by God's mercy and grace), but if we are not willing to repent, then God can't help us, and the devil will be able to take control.

We are to confess our mistakes to God and get back to being "dead indeed unto sin but living for God through our union with Jesus Christ." (Rom. 6:11). We have to see ourselves in faith, the way God's Word says we are to be, because of what Jesus Christ did for us on the Cross. We are to have the belief in our heart, that we are what we want to be, that is, cleansed by the Blood of Christ, (and made free from sin and Satan's influence over us). Also, we are to maintain that position of faith with the help of the Holy Spirit, as we depend only on the Son of God in our personal dealing with Him. That is the position of belief that we can never get away from.

One of the greatest factors in our spiritual development (and God's preparing us for eternal Life), is trusting God to control the attitudes of people that we are in contact with each day. This is especially so in the home,.. as well as in the workshop and elsewhere. Some of the greatest results in the life of believers (that we read of in the Bible), came from meeting people right, and being Scriptural in dealings with others.

Through David meeting people and circumstances right, it put him

on the throne of Israel, even though he had to be tested along the way (and, severely chastened at times). But David was willing to repent when God gave him the test.

Learning to meet people and circumstances scripturally resulted in Joseph being delivered from the prison cell and put on the throne of Egypt (next to the Emperor, Pharaoh). All through the Bible, it was one of the important factors involved in the outstanding blessings that came to willing and repentant believers.

The Bible reveals that it was one of the greatest elements in the life of Jesus Christ on earth. Some remarkable aspects of how Jesus humbled Himself to meet people right, were recorded in detail for us to learn from (Phil. chapter 2). We would all do well to pay special attention to those details and instructions, for manifold blessings will be received by doing so, and, most importantly, long-lasting spiritual blessing, (that will carry over to the next test of our faith). By taking the same position as Jesus Christ did (as an example for us), it will allow God to deal personally with us and for us and will spare us of a lot of problems with other people.

(Phil. 2:5-8 speaks to all of us), (quote), "Although from the beginning He had the nature of God He did not reckon His equality with God a treasure to be tightly grasped. Nay, He stripped Himself of His glory, and took on Him the nature of a bondservant by becoming a man like other men. And being recognized as truly human, He humbled Himself and even stooped to die; yes, to die on a cross."

(Being recognized as human, means that He also had things to meet right in his life, including other people). (Verses 9-11) "It is in consequence of this that God has also so highly exalted Him, and has conferred on Him the Name which is supreme above every other, in order that in the Name of JESUS every knee should bow, of beings in Heaven, of those on the earth, and of those in the underworld, and that every tongue should confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of God the Father."

(Thus, the Apostle was inspired to encourage us (to work out your own salvation, by dealing personally with God) (vs 12-13), "Therefore, my dearly-loved friends, as I have always found you obedient, labor earnestly with fear and trembling—not merely as though I were present with you, but much more now since I am absent from you—labor earnestly, I say, to make sure of your own salvation. For it is God Himself whose power creates within you, the desire to do His gracious will and also brings about the accomplishment of the desire."

Since the Bible tells us that it is God's power that creates the desire within us to do His will (and we may notice it says his gracious will), that brings us back to the importance of our dealing personally and humbly with God, in our own private devotions. We want to go to God in prayer, and open our mind and heart to Him, telling Him what we would like Him to do for us concerning circumstances (or other people), or that we would like Him to show us how to meet those things according to His will (as His Son, Jesus Christ did).

All of our efforts to manipulate people, trying to control situations, (or circumstances), or avenging ourselves of wrongs that

are done to us, are all a result of the self-life (that is still in our heart). Our two biggest enemies to living the Christian life of faith, are self and the devil within our heart and mind. There are no bigger enemies, and they must be gotten rid of. The Holy Spirit is the One to do that for us (if we allow Him). Through our personal dealings with God, He can take those destructive enemies out of our heart.

"Let the same disposition be in you which was in Christ Jesus," the Bible says. And, as "He humbled Himself and even stooped to die; yes, to die on a cross," is the humble position that we are to take in our personal relationship with God (as the Bible instructs us to do).

As we labor earnestly in the faith and being "ever on our guard against a grudging and contentious spirit," then God can work within our hearts. He can replace our old evil nature with the humble nature (disposition) of Jesus Christ, followed by the contentment, peace, purity, and joy (which the Apostle Paul mentioned) (in verses 14-18).

It is always our free-will choice to follow the efforts of the self-life (which are presented by the devil), or, to meet the circumstances (or persons) as God's Word says. (Vs 14-15 tell us), "Be ever on your guard against a grudging and contentious spirit, so that you may always prove yourselves to be blameless and spotless—irreproachable children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as heavenly lights in the world, holding out to them a Message of Life."

(Holding out to others a Message of Life, by our actions and responses in a Christlike way, the Bible says). We can then say with confidence (as the Apostle did, vs 16), "It will then be my glory on the day of Christ that I did not run my race in vain, nor toil in vain."

By humbling ourselves (and allowing God to work for us), we will have the privilege of enjoying His presence and peace in every circumstance. We will be tempted and tried (to see if we will meet wrong treatment as Jesus Christ did) (and as did other Bible examples). However, as we take that humble position and allow God to guide us to know how to meet other people and circumstances according to His will (and the example of Jesus Christ), we can then enjoy having other people to treat us kindly and considerately (as we would like).

(1 Peter 5:6-7) gives the instructions on how to do that), "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

That is all the more reason to have a personal relationship with God (with nothing or nobody else in between, be it our family, the Church, or any human place of trust). We are to go to God in prayer and tell Him what we would like Him to do for us. That is what the Bible teaches (both by Word and example).

When someone went to God and dealt personally with Him, they received enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom that they needed. If there was a hindrance in the way, God revealed it to them, and enabled them to get rid of it. God wants to do that for us.

That is what God did for Joshua when the Israelites had sinned

against God's command, not to take the spoils of the Amorites). Joshua lay on the ground and cried to the Lord, because the Israelites had lost a battle with the men of Ai. However (Joshua 7:10), "The LORD said to Joshua, 'Stand up! What are you doing down on your face? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant which I commanded them to keep.'"

(And vs 13), God said, "Get up, sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, because thus says the Lord God of Israel: There is an accursed thing in your midst, O Israel; you cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the accursed thing from among you.'"

When Joshua dealt personally with God, God revealed the spiritual cause for the Israelite's problems. God ordered Joshua to get the spiritual cause out of the way before He would be with them again. God will do the same for us today (as we deal personally with Him).

John the Baptist told his disciples that "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from Heaven." If we believe that Scripture (which is true), that is, that we have to get all of our light, strength, and understanding of divine Truth from God, then it surely is the best plan to get it from Him personally and directly. The great spiritual issue involved, is that it strikes a serious blow to the self-life.

Dealing personally with God in prayer, is like coming 'face to face' with God, so we should get results when we pour out our heart to Him in a private prayer. It is God who teaches and gives us the light and understanding on how to pray. There is not one thing that we would want to know and receive, that He won't be able to give us the needed light and show us how to receive it. That is the interceding work of the Holy Spirit (says Rom.8:26-27), "In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know what prayers to offer nor in what way to offer them. But the Spirit Himself pleads for us in yearnings that can find no words, and the Searcher of hearts knows what the Spirit's meaning is, because His intercessions for God's people are in harmony with God's will."

That is quite a promise from God, for going to Him in prayer, in a personal relationship with Him for things and circumstances in life.

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