

Becoming a Friend of God

Many people grow up around religion but never discover the profound difference between religious practice and a genuine relationship with God. There's a vast distinction between knowing about God and actually knowing Him personally.

What Does It Mean to Have a Relationship with God?

A relationship with God means you can actually converse with Him. Prayer isn't just throwing requests into the air and hoping something sticks - it's genuine two-way communication. When you have a real conversation, both parties participate. God wants to talk to you, and He wants you to talk to Him.

This relationship is made possible through Jesus Christ. We don't approach God in our own name or righteousness, but in the name of Jesus. When we pray in Jesus' name, God sees us with the same status as His Son. As it says, "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" - John 14:13.

How Can We Be Confident God Hears Us?

The Bible gives us tremendous assurance about prayer. In First John 5:14-15, we read: "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."

When you come in the name of Jesus, you're coming seriously. You've made Him Lord of your life. God hears you, and you can walk away knowing your request is granted - it's done.

Why Are There Sometimes Delays in Receiving Answers?

There are three main reasons why answers to prayer might be delayed:

1. Other People Need to Cooperate

Many natural things come through other people. God often uses people to deliver His answers, but not everyone readily yields to His direction. When people resist God's leading, it can slow down the process.

2. Spiritual Opposition

Sometimes demonic spirits hinder angels from delivering God's answers. We see this in Daniel's experience, where his answer was delayed 21 days due to spiritual warfare. The enemy knows that if he can slow things down, he might get you to give up or look elsewhere for answers.

3. You're Not in Position to Receive

Sometimes God needs to move you into position to receive what you've asked for. This might mean a job change, a move, or some other transition. When people resist these changes, they delay their own breakthrough.

What Does It Mean to Be God's Friend?

Abraham wasn't just called a child of God - he was called "the friend of God." This friendship status came through continued fellowship, walking with God, and growing in faith. Friends enjoy things together that others might not be included in.

Jesus Himself grew in favor with both God and man. If Jesus could grow in favor with God, how much more can we develop our relationship with our Heavenly Father?

How Do We Access God's Presence?

Religion tries to complicate approaching God, but He has made it incredibly simple. You don't need special robes, incense, or perfect spiritual feelings. You can come to God exactly as you are - whether you just rolled out of bed or you're in the middle of a crisis.

God is ready to talk when you are. He's not waiting for you to get spiritually prepared or emotionally perfect. He's your Father, and fathers are accessible to their children at any time.

Does God Really Care About Our Daily Lives?

God is deeply moved by your circumstances. Isaiah tells us, "In all their affliction He was afflicted" - Isaiah 63:9. When you're going through something difficult, God feels it too. He's not distant or uncaring - He's intimately involved in your life.

Your church attendance, your prayer time, your meditation on His Word - all of it matters to Him. In Malachi 3:16, we see that God keeps "a book of remembrance" for those who fear Him and think upon His name. He's literally taking attendance and recording your fellowship with Him.

How Can We Impact God?

Amazingly, we can actually refresh God's heart and cause Him to rejoice. He has made Himself tender toward us to the point where we can move Him emotionally. This isn't because He's weak, but because He has chosen to open His heart to us in relationship.

We can make things easy or difficult for God based on our attitudes and responses. When we approach Him with faith and trust, we make it easy for Him to work in our lives. When we doubt His care or resist His leading, we make it more challenging.

Life Application

This week, challenge yourself to approach God as your friend and Father rather than through religious formality. Start each day with simple conversation - no special preparation required. Share your thoughts, concerns, and gratitude just as you would with a close friend.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Am I approaching God with religious duty or genuine relationship?
- Do I truly believe He hears me when I pray in Jesus' name?
- Am I cooperating with God's leading in my life, or am I resisting changes He wants to make?
- How can I grow from being God's child to becoming His friend?

Remember, God hungers and thirsts for relationship with you even more than you desire relationship with Him. He loves you so much that He gave His only Son for you. You are recognized, recorded, and deeply valued by the Creator of the universe. Draw near to Him, and He will draw near to you.

Quotes

1. A relationship with God is more than belief; it's a living conversation.
2. Through Jesus, prayer becomes a two-way conversation.
3. When you come in Jesus' name, you approach God with the full authority of your relationship with Him.
4. Even when the answer isn't visible, faith knows God is never silent or ignoring you.
5. Abraham wasn't only the father of faith—he was called the friend of God.

6. God desires more than servants and children; He desires friends.
7. If Abraham could walk in friendship with God, so can you.
8. God longs for a friendship with you marked by intimacy, closeness, and limitless possibility.
9. Prayer is not a ritual—it is a conversation with God.
10. Coming in Jesus' name means coming with faith, reverence, and surrender to His Lordship.
11. When God hears your prayer, faith receives the answer before sight ever sees it.
12. You can leave prayer rejoicing because what God heard, He is already bringing to pass.
13. Many of God's blessings arrive through the hands of people He sends.
14. Sometimes the breakthrough isn't waiting on God—it's waiting on your getting into position to receive it.
15. God made access to Him simple; religion and the enemy try to make it complicated.
16. Treat God as the closest friend you'll ever know, and come to Him exactly as you are.
17. Before your day begins, God is already waiting to spend time with you.
18. Your love, worship, and obedience brings joy to the heart of God.
19. When you suffer, God doesn't watch from a distance—He feels your pain with you.
20. Every act of faithfulness matters because what touches your heart also touches God's.

Verses

1. James 4:8
2. 1 John 5:14
3. 1 John 5:15
4. Daniel 10:12-13
5. Isaiah 63:9
6. Malachi 3:16

Summary

Many people grow up around religion but never discover the difference between religious practice and genuine relationship with God. A real relationship means two-way communication through prayer, made possible by approaching God in Jesus' name. When we pray according to God's will, we can be confident He hears us. Sometimes answers are delayed due to other people's cooperation, spiritual opposition, or our need to be repositioned. God desires friendship with us, not just formal worship. We can approach Him anytime, exactly as we are, because He's our Father who cares deeply about our daily lives.